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**FIVE COLLEGE
DEPOSITORY**

AN INVESTIGATION OF EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING THEORY: A CASE
STUDY OF THE CERTIFICATE IN ADULT EDUCATION PROGRAM IN
LESOTHO

A Dissertation Presented

by

MANTINA V. MOHASI

Submitted to the Graduate School of the
University of Massachusetts Amherst in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

May 2000

School of Education

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AN INVESTIGATION OF EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING THEORY: A CASE
STUDY OF THE CERTIFICATE IN ADULT EDUCATION PROGRAM IN
LESOTHO

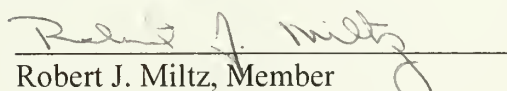
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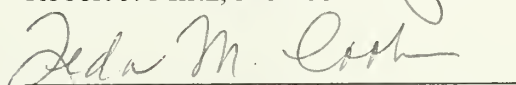
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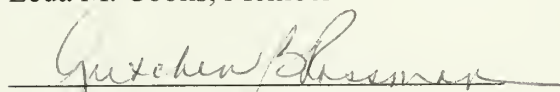
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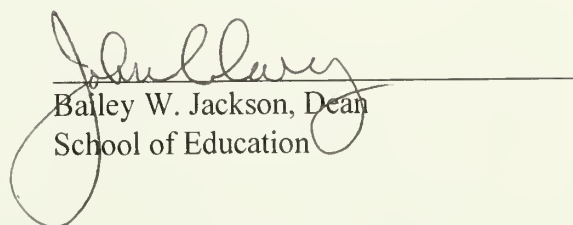
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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my dearest mother 'M'athabang A. Mphale who never went to school, but supported my desire to be educated. 'M' e Theresia Monare played a big role as my second mother, my teacher at elementary school, and my academic role model. At the time that I grew up it was very hard for a girl to go to school in my community; however, she encouraged and supported me to pursue my studies. I am thankful to my family who came with me to the United States of America to give me moral support: my loving and caring husband Rantina, our three beautiful daughters 'M'apalo, 'M'amotsamai, and Mpone; and Malebo, our handsome boy and the last-born.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to gratefully acknowledge the members of my dissertation committee, Dr. David R. Evans, Dr. Robert J. Miltz, Dr. Gretchen B. Rossman, and Dr. Leda M. Cooks who believed that I could do this study. Particularly I thank Professor Rossman who always encouraged and supported me. I gratefully thank Dr. Gary Bernhard, the University Without Walls Director, and his staff, who gave me the opportunity to study the University Without Walls Program. Dr. Bernhard further played a large role in editing some chapters of my dissertation.

I would like to thank the following individuals and groups for making my studies a pleasure while I was in the U.S: Center for International Education staff, colleagues and friends who devoted friendship and inspired suggestions at the time of need, Glynn Anderson from the School of Education who inspired me with her encouraging words of faith and trust in me, Lisa Deyo, who sacrificed her time to meticulously and intelligently edit all my dissertation in a timely manner. Her words of encouragement: "Congratulations, Mantina!!" helped me to overcome the isolation feeling of writing. Special thanks to Peg Louraine who worked very hard to format the dissertation chapters. The Kosha family became my closest relatives in the U.S, and the Collison family were caring landlords. I want to thank my neighbors, Craig Cahall and his family, for friendship and support.

I thank all the people in Lesotho who sacrificed their time for me during the data collection process: the Dean, Faculty of Education, the Director of IEMS, and IEMS staff, and the Head of Adult Education Division and her staff. I particularly thank the students (the focus group) who sacrificed their time in order to attend Saturday meetings

with me. I thank my relatives and friends, in particular, Mosese's family for taking care of my family's property when I was away.

I thank the Kellogg Foundation, who sponsored my studies in the U.S. In particular, my gratitude and praise goes to Winnehl Tubman, the Program Specialist for the Kellogg Southern Africa Study Grant Fellowship Program by being a good program advisor and listener. I thank the National University of Lesotho for granting me a study leave to pursue my studies.

Khotso! Pula! Nala! (Peace! Rain! Prosperity!)

ABSTRACT

AN INVESTIGATION OF EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING THEORY: A CASE STUDY OF THE CERTIFICATE IN ADULT EDUCATION PROGRAM IN LESOTHO

May 2000

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The purpose of this study was to investigate concepts of experiential learning theory in Lesotho. Common practice in the Certificate Program in Adult Education reflected a gap between theory and practice in teaching and learning with too much reliance on the lecture method.

This study's aims were a) to find out how people in Lesotho understand experiential learning principles like experience, freedom, democracy, and equality; b) to explore how people would support implementation of experiential learning approaches like collaborative learning, cooperative learning, service learning, role plays, drama, simulations, and credit for prior learning assessment; c) to find out what would be the barriers and the possibilities in integrating or implementing experiential learning approaches.

Qualitative research methods such as intensive interviews, class observation, focus group, and a literature review were used to collect data. Structured open-ended grand tour questions guided the interviews. The population in the study consisted of

twenty-two participants: four administrators from the Institute of Extra Mural Studies, six lecturers who taught the Certificate Program, six students, and six employers.

The analysis and interpretation followed a thematic approach. There were three findings. First, the concept of experiential learning as used by Dewey and his followers in higher education was new to most people that were interviewed. The meanings that Dewey gave to the concepts of democracy, freedom, and equality are different from the meanings Basotho people give to these concepts because, to them, authority and responsibility are attached to the concepts. Second, experiential learning techniques like collaborative learning, role-play, and drama can be more fully developed in the learning and teaching process in Lesotho. Third, barriers to implementing experiential learning practices include the rigid structure of the current Certificate Program, the bureaucracy of the University, and the working relations between the University and the Basotho Community.

In conclusion, the study recommended that needs assessment be undertaken; service learning be tried out first; and the Credit for Prior Learning Assessment be piloted on an experimental basis.

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CHAPTER 1

THE PURPOSE AND FOCUS OF THE STUDY

This study investigates how Experiential Learning Theory is understood at the Institute of Extra Mural Studies (IEMS) Certificate in Adult Education Program, whether experiential learning approaches are integrated into the pedagogy of the Certificate Program, and implications for introducing these approaches into the Certificate Program. The Institute of Extra Mural Studies is an extension arm of the National University of Lesotho (NUL).

I begin this chapter by introducing the IEMS' Departments and mission statement and discuss in detail the Certificate Program that is offered in Adult Education Division. Adult Education Division is one of the IEMS' Divisions that will be discussed later in the paper. In this section, I focus on the Program's admissions regulations, the course content, class schedule, the lecturers and people who enroll in the Program. I further discuss the research framework that includes the topic and the purpose, statement of the problem, the significance of the study, and the audience. I introduce the questions for the study, the design and methods used, the limitations of the study, and the major findings. I finally discuss my position in the study and present a summary of Chapter 1 and overview of the remaining chapters.

The Institute of Extra Mural Studies

The Institute of Extra Mural Studies is one of the four Institutes of the National University of Lesotho. Its mission is to carry the University's services to the Basotho

Community. IEMS has four Divisions or Departments which carry out its mission: Research Media and Evaluation, Non-Formal and Continuing Education, Business and Management Development, and Adult Education. The latter two divisions offer credit programs to those Basotho men and women who want to obtain University certificates. In this study, I concentrate on Adult Education Division's (ADE) Certificate Program because it serves a different clientele with different objectives. Moreover, I worked for the Adult Education Division for six successive years, and I am familiar with how the program is run.

The Division of Adult Education (ADE) is charged with the responsibility of running sub-degree or undergraduate programs. ADE's purpose is to train people who want to obtain a University Certificate in Adult Education, a Diploma in Adult Education, a Diploma in Mass Communication, or a Bachelor's degree in Adult Education. Admission requirements differ from program to program. The Certificate in Adult Education, as the main focus of this study, will be the only program discussed.

Certificate in Adult Education Admission Requirements

In order to be admitted to the Certificate in Adult Education Program, candidates are required to possess:

- a) a Junior Certificate (J.C.) plus a professional certificate of a duration of at least one academic year from a recognized institution, with one year experience in work related to informal, formal, or non-formal education, or,

- b) a General Certificate in Education, (G.C.E) plus one year experience in work related to informal, formal or non-formal Education, or,
- c) a Junior certificate (J.C.) plus five years' experience in work related to informal, formal, and non-formal education. (IEMS' 1993 Student Handbook)

A Junior Certificate may be considered the equivalent of Junior High school in the American system, and C. O. S. C. to a U.S. High School Diploma. C.O.S.C. is in class one, two, and three. Below class three is a G.C.E. and is regarded as poor performance in the Lesotho School System. Normally, candidates who obtain a J.C or G.C.E. are not admitted to full- time University programs. Furthermore, non-formal or formal programs, according to IEMS, are community-based. They include training in nutrition, family planning, literacy programs, street vendor programs, agricultural extension programs, polytechnic programs, vocational schools, and primary or secondary schools.

Courses for the Certificate in Adult Education

The Certificate in Adult Education Program is a two-year program; the courses that are offered in this Program are as follows:

Certificate Year One:

- AEC 100-6 Communication Skills¹
- AEC 120-6 Learning and Teaching in Adult Education
- AEC 130-6 Principles of Adult Education

¹The second part of the course is offered in Diploma 1.

Certificate Year Two:

AEC 200-6 Organization and Implementation of Community Programs
AEC 220-6 Adult Education Practice in Lesotho
AEC 230-6 Adult Education and the Community (IEMS' 1996/97
Certificate in Adult Education course syllabus).

All the courses are six credit hours per academic year. That is, the contact time with the teacher in the classroom is three hours weekly in each semester of the year of study. The academic year starts in August and ends in May the following year. It is divided into two semesters. The first semester starts in August and ends in December, and the second one starts in January and ends in June. The six contact hours are divided into the two semesters. Students proceed to year two after passing an examination and having fulfilled the course work requirements. Certificate Two is a terminal year, but students can re-apply in order to enroll in the Diploma in Adult Education Program.

Class Schedule

The Certificate Program schedule runs on the weekend only. Each course is taught Saturday and Sunday. Appendix B indicates each meeting time. There used to be a residential period that covered two weeks, but that has been discontinued. During this period, students attended weekly classes that ran from 8.00 a.m. to 4.00 p.m. daily.

The Lecturers in the Certificate in Adult Education Program

The Division of Adult Education runs four undergraduate programs and one of them leads to a Bachelor's degree in Adult Education (B. Ed.). There are six full time staff members. They share the responsibility of teaching, administration, and writing

course materials for all the Programs. Again the B. Ed Program is given greater priority because it demands continuity and has lecturers who are not only subject specialists, but adult educators/trainers as well. As a result, part time lecturers are hired to lecture in the Certificate in Adult Education Program. Part- time lecturers are people who are employees of Government Agencies, Non-Governmental Organizations, Parastatal Organizations, and/ or Private Organizations. For instance, such Organizations include Ministries of Education, Agriculture, Health, Rural Development, Water and Energy and Food and Nutrition. When I was in the field, there were three part time lecturers and three full time members that taught the Certificate Program.

According to the University regulations, all the lecturers must have a Bachelors degrees in Adult Education and/or Education. Preference is given to candidates who have Masters degrees in Adult Education or its equivalent, plus one year of professional experience in formal or non-formal programs. Other criteria that such candidates must meet include one or more of the following: experience in supervising students' research projects and teaching experience, especially teaching adult students. Such candidates must have research experience and publications in reputable journals.

The Students in the Certificate Program

Candidates who are admitted to the Certificate in Adult Education Program are men and women who have returned to college for various personal reasons. Many of them are full-time workers, parents, and community members who perform various community roles. They include politicians, community chiefs or chieftainesses, and church leaders. Places of employment for the full-time workers include government or

non-governmental organizations (NGO), and private organizations. The work that these students do includes a range of development programs for the community people, especially those in the rural areas. Their responsibilities include working in village clinics, helping villagers with health problems like breast-feeding, nutrition, HIV awareness-raising and family planning. Some students work at rehabilitation centers, or in community water projects, local courts or literacy projects. What the students do demands teaching and learning approaches that will help them do their work effectively.

One constraint some Certificate students experience is that they have to pay for their own tuition and that of their children. There are few organizations that provide financial aid. In the beginning of 1997, the government of Lesotho introduced loan opportunities to part-time students, but the criteria used to select those who were eligible included an age restriction. Only younger adults could benefit. It is, therefore, important that these adult learners are exposed to different approaches that can help them to help themselves. I believe that experiential learning approaches are appropriate because they are based on problem identification, reflection, search for solutions, testing of new ideas, and further reflection until action is taken. In the process of reflection, students become more empowered in dealing with problems (Dewey, 1938).

The Conceptual Framework

In this section, I am discussing the "what" of the study (Rossman & Rallis, 1998). That is, the topic and the nature of the problem, review of research questions, significance of the study, my interests, beliefs, or position regarding the problem, the

limitations, the audience, the major findings, and the summary and overview of the remaining chapters.

Topic and Purpose

This study is an investigation of Experiential Learning Theory: A Case Study of the Institute of Extra Mural Studies (IEMS) of the National University of Lesotho (NUL). This topic is important to the students who enroll in the Adult Education Programs of IEMS. From observing University Without Walls at the University of Massachusetts and from a review of the literature, I found that experiential learning approaches help learners to reflect on their past experiences with the purpose of learning from them. Experiential learning approaches help students to improve on communication skills (reading, writing, speaking, and listening). Students get a chance to engage in hands-on activities that close the gap between theory and practice and enhance the ability to construct knowledge which, in the end, helps students feel confident and motivated to learn more. Students' prior experience is recognized. In Lesotho, from my experience, there is a lot that is known locally that can be used for developmental and economic purposes. However, because such knowledge is not recognized or accredited, young adults do not value it. For instance, people can learn how to use natural resources like grass for economic purposes.

The purpose of the study, among others, was to inquire into people's opinions regarding experiential learning approaches and to find out if they would support the Credit for Prior Learning Program. I also hoped that through a qualitative research approach, people would have time to reflect on the Certificate Program and its purpose

in relation to the mission statement of IEMS that has already been referred to earlier.

The reader will learn from the subsequent chapters that indeed people started to think and dialogue about the importance of experiential learning approaches in relation to the Certificate Program. Therefore, the questions guiding discussions are:

1. How did IEMS teachers, students, and administrators and University staff members, particularly Faculty of Education staff members, understand experiential learning theory?
2. How far were experiential learning approaches integrated into the Certificate pedagogy?
3. What could be done to increase the application of experiential learning approaches in the Certificate Program in Adult Education?
4. What would be the barriers in implementing experiential learning approaches and how can they be overcome if experiential learning approaches, in particular, Credit for Prior Learning Program, were introduced into the Certificate Program in Adult Education?

Statement of the Problem

As I started to work at IEMS, I experienced some of the following problems: some students could not proceed to the next class because they failed. How does an adult student fail in a program that is relevant to her needs? Some were transferred to places where they could not continue with their studies. What bothered me was the extensive use of traditional teaching methods, such as lecturing, as the main strategy for teaching, which in the end did not produce good results. By good results I mean the

ability for students to reflect on what they have learned without having to reproduce the teacher's notes, which is what usually happened. Sometimes I wondered how these students applied the theory that they learned in the classroom in the communities at the grassroots level. These, and other reasons, left me wondering if people who are not trained to teach adults can teach in a college classroom.

In a study that Bwatwa (1992) conducted at IEMS, it was confirmed that the lecture-method was used most frequently in the classroom. Though lecture has a long tradition in higher education, it is teacher- centered; as a result it has a tendency to create learners who depend on a teacher (Kolb, 1984). Learners do not get the chance to interact and make meaning from the environment because the teacher tells them what to do, and they respond. According to Brookfield (1987) and Knowles (1984), lecture should be the least used pedagogical methodology in teaching an adult learner. Adult Learners are generally mature people who, in most cases, come to college because they have some goals to achieve. They come because they qualitatively want to meet some needs, some of which might be short term or long term. Sometimes the goals are not clearly stated, but they exist. The lecture method alone cannot meet the student's expectations entirely, even if it might be true to say that some students learn well from it.

Significance of the Study

In developing countries, people value education; they believe in it for their living. They hope that if they become functionally literate, their lives will change economically. Their role model is developed countries; they believe that people who

come from the developed countries lead better lives because of education. A study like this can help teachers to learn about better teaching approaches that can keep the motivation of the learners alive. When asked why they return to school, many adult learners at the Institute used to say that they needed to be better persons who know appropriate skills to use in order to do a job effectively. They come to a higher learning Institution because they hope to get what they don't have- skills to train other adults. They come because having a higher Certificate means getting or retaining a job; sometimes it means promotion to a higher scale.

IEMS has a commitment to provide training to the Basotho Community. It has to work hard to achieve its mission statement. Learners, too, need to think more of the role they can play in learning with regard to what their teachers do. So, the study would also benefit IEMS staff with the space to reflect on their own patterns and interactions and consider some changes or modifications. Through reflection, students might have suggestions as to how they would play a role in the learning process. I remember cases when, if I went to class to tell the students that their teacher was going to be late, I used to suggest that they could continue with their reading or go to the Library. Most of the students would use the opportunity to socialize or do something else but not read. This was not bad, but their attitude towards learning showed how they depended on the teacher. I might be making a wrong judgment, but some would even say that when the teacher was not in the classroom, they felt lost because they came to be taught. If experiential learning approaches are implemented, students and their teachers would benefit from the use of critical reflective thinking approach because critical reflection is about meaning making; it is about examining one's attitudes and beliefs with the

purpose of selecting useful ones or changing the way one looks at issues (Brookfield, 1995; Mezirow, 1991).

In my mind, I had a picture of students who would positively change their attitudes and problem solving approaches. I pictured students who would have an impact at their different work places because of the change that would be brought about by their participation in the new Program. I pictured community people who would appreciate what IEMS is doing. From my experience, there were those policy makers who did not believe in adult education, who through dialogue and action might change their beliefs.

I might have been hoping for something impossible, bearing in mind the cultural aspects of the University, students' expectations about teaching and learning, full-time lecturers' teaching load, and the part-time lecturers' commitment. The concern was that experiential learning approaches need commitment, support, understanding, patience, trust, feedback, and responsibility on the part of all people concerned.

In my country, like any country, adults are decision-makers in the family, in the community, and at the national level. As a result, they need the best training to enable them to make sound decisions. They should be helped to empower themselves so that they can help communities at the grassroots to empower themselves. Some of the IEMS students were people who held political positions at their places of employment. For instance, some worked as teachers and trainers in Rehabilitation Centers, CARE, World Vision, nutrition, health (village clinicians), literacy, farmers training, and income generation.

Experiential learning approaches deal with meaning making and knowledge construction. The study was not about gender, but since the majority of community work has been in the hands of women in my country, and since the larger group of students who enrolled at IEMS were women, it would be interesting to share their experiences in how they constructed knowledge.

The University in Lesotho is the only Institute of higher learning in the country, with the exception of the Teacher Training College and the Polytechnics, so it is important that it produces good quality workers. It should educate people who would benefit the country. Such a success would lead to the support of community projects and good working relations between the learners and the teachers, the learners and the employers as well as the community and the Institute.

I hope that as relations between the teachers and learners change, retention levels will also improve in the classroom, and teaching and learning would be a joy to both parties. I had seen how some teachers at University of Massachusetts enjoyed their teaching because they used different approaches. They made learning easier, too, because learners were able to identify methods that suited them. I am also aware that I have no power to make anybody change based on the study's findings. Hopefully the findings from this study will add to the knowledge that is needed for development and desired change in the lives of people in Lesotho, a developing country. It will add to the small number of studies that have been carried out in Lesotho, and perhaps the Southern Region of Africa, about learning and teaching of adult learners. Those who have participated in the study hopefully have gained some new insights about effective teaching and learning methods that are potentially beneficial to grassroots people.

Audience

My primary audience is those adult educators and students in developing countries, especially Lesotho, who might have different perspectives about experiential learning theory as a teaching and learning model. That is, I was thinking of those adult educators who find themselves teaching adult students without any prior training. I believed that it was important for them to know and understand relevant, but different approaches, so that they could have an opportunity to share what they knew with students. Students, too, had already gained experience in learning and problem solving, but because of their past expectations of teaching and learning (the teacher is the authority), they might feel uncomfortable in fully participating in class. That means that they would need to be encouraged to participate.

Similarly, I was thinking of students who might have more practical experience in hands-on activities than their teachers; for instance, organizing and implementing projects at the grassroots level. Such students might fear to freely share their knowledge with other students in class if they were not supported. Some students might also resist learning from their colleagues if they believed that they wanted to hear the master (teacher) teach. I hope that if students understand what experiential learning approaches mean to them, they might support the idea that the approaches be incorporated into the Certificate Program.

Two other important groups were the University faculty and the policy makers in the community. A majority of the faculty members did not know much about the IEMS program. I hope that if the Credit for Prior Learning Program is established at the IEMS Adult Education Program, a greater number of channels will open for adult

learners to be easily admitted to the full time programs at any University that runs full time adult education programs. Furthermore, if experiential learning approaches were integrated into the program, Accreditation Boards and experiential learning councils or tests such as the College Level Examination Program (CLEP) would need to be implemented, too. This would be helpful to a developing country like Lesotho, that does not have many training colleges, to recognize and assess learning experiences. The problem might be how to explain experience in the context of Lesotho. What criteria would be used to select a learning experience?

Review of Research Questions

The study followed a qualitative research approach, and I used grand tour questions as the key to most of the discussions that I had with the participants. Grand tour questions, as defined by Creswell (1994), are open- ended questions and general statements that help to create themes that will be used in data collection. They are what the researcher goes with to the field and can change. The details are discussed in chapter three; however, I divided the questions according to administrators, lecturers, and students as follows.

1. Administrators and Lecturers. Which experiential learning approaches were already part of the pedagogy of the Certificate Program? Which of the experiential learning approaches could be implemented without changing the University policies? How would they support implementation of the approaches? Especially the Credit for Prior learning Program? How would such a program be called?

2. Students. What were the student's perceptions towards experiential learning theory? How did they define experience? What did they understand by freedom in the classroom? How did they use reflection and dialogue in the classroom? How did they relate theory and practice as they worked with the local people at the grassroots level?

Design and Methodology

The design and methodology will be discussed in detail in chapter three; however, it is important for the reader to know that the study was conducted in Lesotho from mid-June to mid-September 1999. As a qualitative case study, the participants included IEMS administrators that run the Certificate Program, the lecturers that taught in the Program, and some selected Certificate students who formed a focus group. The selected students were all working in the community, so their employers were given a questionnaire to fill out.

I applied a triangulation approach. That is, I obtained the primary data through interviews and class observation. I used video camera and camera to take still pictures. The Video tapes assisted me to view the whole lectures after the observations were completed. I also reviewed relevant official documents from IEMS regarding the Certificate Program.

Limitations

English is the medium of instruction at the Institute. One problem that I observed was the students' struggle to express some of their interesting experiences

from the field. A discussion of using the English language could be another study because I would need to consider the cultural values and beliefs of the Nation regarding the English Language. Very often, when I was in class, a student would say, ‘ Can I explain in my local language, so that you can understand what I want to say?’ Even during the interviews, some students wanted to express themselves in English, but they failed. Continued use of the English language would not be a barrier to implementing some good experiential approaches; alternative report methods would have to be considered.

I was aware that IEMS Adult Education programs had more women than men. I decided to address gender problems if they arose. Bringing gender issues to the front would jeopardize the study. I did not want male students to stay out of the study because it was associated with gender.

The literature review was limited to Western practices because I wanted to know about experiential learning theory and its approaches as it is practiced in the West. I wanted to learn how some writers, writing from Western perspective or other perspectives, understand and recommend an application of experiential learning theory in an adult education class. Without any comparisons, I would then find out how Basotho people would define experiential learning theory, especially concepts like freedom and equality. I wanted to learn whether what was done at the University Without Walls of the University of Massachusetts could be replicated in IEMS Adult Education Programs. How would such a program be called? What would be the barriers to implementing it?

Major Findings

The study investigated Experiential Learning Theory at the Certificate in the Adult Education Program. The main factors that were investigated included: definition of principles associated with experiential learning theory like experience, democracy, freedom, and equality, experiential approaches which included cooperative learning, service learning, role plays, drama, and simulation, and the Credit for Prior Learning Assessment as a Program that could be adapted for the Certificate Program. Finally people's opinions were sampled regarding possible barriers to implementing the new program.

Experience

According to the participants, the meaning of experience or (*litsebo*) in Sesotho, is the knowledge that a person has acquired on his/her own from the environment through the use of the five senses of the body. The definition does not differ much from how Dewey (1938) and other writers cited in chapter two explain it. However, the degree of focus on self- reflection, critical reflection, decision- making, and action differs or is applied minimally in the classroom in the case of IEMS' Certificate Program.

Freedom and Democracy

As the participants explained both *freedom* and *democracy*, they clumped them as political words that may not be easily separated. It was not easy for participants to discuss both concepts without talking about politics. Democracy existed in Lesotho's

vocabulary as sharing of power or (*Karolelano ea matla*) by governments; however, it was not commonly used until Western politics were introduced into the country. Both lecturers and students understood Democracy as the sharing of ideas by both the students and their lecturers in the classroom. Freedom or democracy in the classroom would be controlled because the democracy that makes sense to Basotho is the one that has an authority figure. That is, an authority figure is a person who is responsible for day-to-day decisions. As a result, a teacher is regarded as an authority figure.

Equality

According to the participants, it would be hard to talk about equality in the IEMS classrooms because women dominate in the Certificate Program. However, male students said they didn't feel intimidated in the classroom. Experiential approaches like service learning can be introduced as a test to see if the Credit for Prior Learning Assessment could work. The latter program would need time for people to understand it before it could be introduced. Otherwise it can work in non-formal, non-credit programs.

Barriers and possibilities are discussed in detail in chapter six; however, the majority of the people interviewed identified the structures of the Certificate Program and the University bureaucracy as the main barriers.

My Interest, Beliefs, or Position in the Study

I started to teach adult students as early as 1974. I taught at different levels, at a vocational school, in teacher training programs and finally in university extension. In all

those years of teaching, I was using skills that I learned while teaching at the primary level or while training primary teachers. My intuition and the experience I gained as I moved from one job to another worked as my guide in teaching adult students.

My interest in adult education developed when I was working at the Institute of Extra Mural Studies (IEMS) of the National University of Lesotho (NUL). I started to work as a part time lecturer; later, I was hired as a full time member of the staff. According to Prosser (1967), it is usually the case that in developing countries, teachers who teach at formal institutions, especially teacher training colleges are hired as lecturers on a part time basis. Sometimes the reason is a lack of funds to hire a full time staff, or, in some cases, there are no local teachers available who are trained in that particular field.

In developing countries, there is a need to have people who are self-directed and who have confidence in them so that they can continue to initiate developmental community projects. Self-directedness in this context means that a person is able to initiate projects that benefit the majority of the people. My country, like other developing countries, is experiencing serious problems, such as poverty, unemployment, illiteracy, and inequality that lead to high incidence of crime. We have poor communication facilities that are controlled by the government or elite and political unrest due to power struggles. High population density in towns adds to problems such as over-crowded schools and high failure rates in primary, secondary and high schools.

I believe in education that helps students to develop further their already existing cognitive, affective, and psychomotor skills, skills that are needed for social, economic,

or political reason (Roussau in Dame, 1997; Jarvis, 1987; Nyerere, 1976). For instance, education should teach people how to read and write or how to solve conflicts without having to fight or kill each other. It should help people to think about their actions and take responsibility for them. Because of education, people should be able to trust other people and care for them. I believe in lifelong education that encourages self-awareness, reflection and action.

The role of education should be to develop a person who continuously reflects on and critically analyzes her own unconscious assumptions that are based on deeply held beliefs derived from her life experiences and theoretical learning. For instance, a student should be able to think about her attitudes and behaviors. For instance, if she decides to do a certain activity, she should consider the consequences of her actions and she should have skills to reflect on them. Or if she likes to sing, she should find other ways of improving her singing so that she can use it for economic purposes.

IEMS' mission, as the only Higher Learning University Extension Institution in the country, is to train learners who will benefit their communities as community developers, literacy instructors, and home economics tutors in the villages. I believe that IEMS should strive to train people who will continue to serve their country more. As I went into the field, I observed that IEMS' Certificate Program was not fully coordinating and collaborating with the community. That is, there was a gap between theory and practice; between the communities' needs (the employer), the learner's needs, and what the Institute offers. Some trainees suffered from lack of recognition (promotion). Some faced a dilemma: whether to attend those programs that the employer viewed as more relevant. A learner was caught in the middle between the

program and the community. I believed, therefore, that good education is the one that prepares students to fit in their society.

In my experience, adult learners return to college because they have their own goals that they want to achieve, which in some cases are not clearly articulated. At the beginning of every academic year at IEMS, adult students are asked the following questions: "What are your needs? What do you plan to achieve from the program?" Each year students gave the same answers: "I want to have good training skills", or "I want to keep my job," or "I want recognition and promotion after I complete the program." Some learners wanted to obtain a university diploma in the hope of gaining better paying work. The same concerns were experienced during the data collection process. In developing countries, Lesotho included, educators want learners to pass examinations. Because of that concern, they may not care, pay attention to, or acknowledge learners' interests.

Educators, too, want their learners to be successful. Passing examinations is presently equated with success for the students, rather than social change and development, or the ability to keep on learning in the future. Passing examinations does not always mean that one can perform well in the field. In order to bridge the gap between theory and practice, there is a need to use appropriate teaching and learning methods.

Therefore, my position was to explore teaching and learning approaches that put adult students at the center of learning. Approaches that would help adult students in developing countries, particularly in Lesotho, to solve some basic environmental life problems within their control: bad roads, unprotected water fountains, conflict within

villages, financing for their children's school fees, and other life problems that they may have. Some communities, (for example Grameen Bank in Bangladesh) are already solving some economic problems through participation and collaboration within communities. In some urban villages in Lesotho, for instance, some villagers have organized cooperative groups that work as village police at night. From my experience, rural communities are already cooperating and collaborating in many ways. They may need some guidance in carrying out their activities more productively, effectively, and efficiently. These are the communities that can benefit from IEMS students' presence if they (students) have appropriate skills and approaches of how a community can be assisted to lead a better way of living.

Furthermore, I went into the field aware that experiential learning approaches, especially the Credit for Prior Learning Program would be a new phenomenon that might need time for people to understand. I was also aware that the approaches are just another way of trying to help to make learning more relevant and pleasing to the learners. That is, by exploring experiential learning approaches, I am not implying that they are the only best methods to be used in the teaching and learning of the Certificate Program. I am merely saying there are a number of ways to kill a cat. That is, there are multiple ways of learning.

Summary and Overview of the Chapters

There are seven chapters in this study. The first chapter provides the reader with the overview of the Institute and the conceptual framework, which includes: the purpose of the study, the review of grand tour questions, the statement of the problem,

significance of the study, limitations, summary of the major findings, and the researcher's position. The second chapter reviews the related literature to the problem, and Chapter 3 discusses the design and methodology. Chapters 4 through 6 discuss the detailed findings of the study, and then Chapter 7 reflects on the implications of the study and provides recommendations for further research.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter reviews related literature on Experiential Learning Theory. The body of literature on experience and learning in adult education is wide- ranging and extensive; therefore, I intend to focus on the following three areas:

- The first area discusses how Dewey (1859-1952) an American philosopher and the recognized founder of Experiential Learning Theory (Kolb, 1968; Jarvis, 1995; and Alexander, 1987), defines experience.
- The second area discusses a few carefully selected theories that build on or relate to Dewey's ideas about experience. These include, among others, cognitive/development (Piaget's (1974) Knowledge Construction), andragogy as adult learning theory (Knowles 1970, 1984; and Lindeman, 1951 in Brookfield, 1987), experiential learning (Kolb's (1984) learning model), and critical pedagogy (Mezirow 1991, 1995, and 1996; Brookfield, 1995 and 1996; and Freire, 1993). The University Without Walls Program, an experiential learning model of the University of Massachusetts, will form part of this section.
- The third and last area discusses experiential learning approaches. These approaches will be sub-divided into humanistic and critical reflective thinking.

Some of the theorists in section two will be mentioned again in the last section.

Dewey's ideas about experience will be explored in detail because the study is about the

investigation of experiential learning theory as discussed by Dewey (1938). Other works of Dewey that are relevant to the topic will also be part of the discussion. Furthermore, most of the current writers who examine experience and adult learning seem to build on what Dewey had intelligently observed regarding experience and learning of an adult learner (Merriam & Caffarella, 1999). The three sections mentioned above will be followed by a brief summary. There will be a summary at the end of the chapter that will also provide an overview to Chapter 3.

Part One: Dewey's Definition of Experience

Initially, Dewey focused on children's education. According to Lewis and William (1994) and Benne and Stanley (1950), Dewey wrote about adults' problems later in his 1938 book: Experience and Education. He wrote this book to explain the importance of progressive ideology. Dewey, a pragmatist and progressive (Cooney, Cross, & Trunk, 1993), argues that learners are treated as information observers not as processors. He focuses on experience because he believes that:

education is coterminous with life and that the function of all education is to safeguard and extend the capacity of learners for continued growth and establish the firmest possible theoretical basis for partnership between educators of the young and educators of adults. (Benne & Stanley, 1950, p. 74)

According to Dewey, education and life are not to be separated because the role of education is to help a person to continue to grow mentally, morally and socially. He advocates for more experience-based learning, "there is one permanent frame of reference: namely, the organic connection between education and personal experience" (Dewey, 1938-1939, p. 25). Education should not be separated from experience because

it is about life, and life is made up of beliefs, attitudes, and assumptions that people have based on their environment. Experience is day-to-day living that may or may not be educative.

According to Cooney, Cross, and Trunk (1993), Dewey believes in the scientific method as a proper way of solving problems in the world. He questions schools that teach from ready-made curricula or 'subject-matter-centered' schools because such schools fail to put the learner at the center of learning. Such schools also assume that learners are similar in all aspects of learning. Contrary to these views of education, Dewey (1938-1939) believes that:

Education should begin by mirroring what our situation actually is, i.e. we are organisms dealing with an environment. So then education should be experimenting, since our survival reflects an experiment with the environment--we do try many alternative ways for solving problems that we come up against in our world. (pp. 135-136)

Dewey's point is that school curriculum must relate to society's beliefs; for instance, education that is grounded in experience fosters democracy. Learners should live democracy even in the learning environment so that they do not separate learning from reality. I am aware that Dewey is making an example of his own democratic country and that another country that has a different philosophy would emphasize its own mission. For instance, Lesotho would advocate its own type of democracy.

According to Dewey (1938), experience is a cyclical process of learning with the purpose of constructing knowledge and making meaning from interpreting the environment. It involves sensing a problem by a learner. That is, the learner comes in contact with the problem physically and takes action. It is not an educative experience if it does not involve reflection, decision-making and action. In his 1916 book, Democracy

and Education, Dewey stresses action and reflection. After coming in contact with a problem, a learner takes action, reflects on it, and takes another action based on what hypothesis she comes up with. He says, "When we experience something, we act on it, we do something about it, then we suffer consequences" (p. 22). Dewey is also aware that it is not always the case that people actively act on their experiences. Maybe that is why he discusses some experiential principles. (They are discussed later in this section).

Experience to Dewey is meaningful if it involves some action and reflection. In an example of a burned child, experience becomes meaningful if the child will reflect on the past action, make decisions not to go near the fire again, or be careful not to touch it. The example should not be mistaken for conditioning in behaviorist learning because in experiential learning, there is reflection and decision making, followed by another action. Dewey's (1938) concept of experiential learning suggests learning that is reflective, decisive, selective, and action oriented. Such learning has the following steps:

- experience will start at the problem, which will be physical contact with an incident,
- conditions of the incident will be observed, the idea will be to learn more about the problem.
- the next step is formation of possible hypotheses of what might have happened, or what the nature of the problem is, and some suggestions to solve it.
- then the elaboration of suggested conclusions.
- Active experimenting and testing follows. The conclusion that will be made will lead to another incident that will need to be tested again. (p. 20)

According to these learning steps, learning is cyclical. That is, the learning cycle is continuous because in searching for the causes of a problem or a happy event in order to form a hypothesis, there will be a need to reflect, think, test, and suggest a possible answer or a conclusion. The new conclusion is also tested as a continuation of the learning process. However, to me, the cycle makes such a process of learning very linear and scientific even though emotions are involved in experience. For instance, in experience, learners use their emotions, attitudes, and feelings to make decisions on what they learn. Experience becomes the main basis for making conclusions because the learner refers to past experience, reevaluates it, and makes judgments based on similar experiences that occurred before.

Experience involves perceiving the environment based on how it is presented and how the learner herself sees it. It is knowledge construction by the learner. Knowledge construction, a process whereby a student transforms information in order to understand it, to make meaning, is currently an issue in adult learning (Sutherland, 1998; Tennant 1997). From observation, not all experiences can be good or bad. Some are good ideas, like learning how to use the internet and getting into an educational chat room or learning how to do shopping on the internet. Others are bad like failing an examination that you thought you had prepared very hard for it.

Dewey (1938) says, "Experience is primarily an active-passive affair; not primarily cognitive. It includes cognition in the degree in which it is cumulative or amounts to something or has meaning" (p. 37). This is a complex statement that will be revisited later when Piaget (1977) is discussed. In Dewey's example of a burned child, he explains that experience will not have meaning if the child does not realize the cause

of her being burnt. There has to be meaning making from experience because not all experience has meaning; therefore, not all experience is learning. Also, I believe that it depends on the learner whether what is learned is meaningful or makes sense to her/him.

Dewey (1938) further defines experience based on learning principles. Some of these principles, among others, include continuity, humane methods, negotiation, reflection, habit, freedom, and environment.

Continuity

In experiential learning continuity is explained as one idea leading to another. For instance, a person who learns a new skill (reading an e-mail) may want to move further and learn how to create a web page. One can also assume that according to the principle of continuity, repetition is needed in order for information to be remembered. Dewey (1938) further says that related ideas that are experienced during the continuity process can be transferred to other similar experiences. A learner can compare past experiences with the problem at hand or connect them with what happened to someone else. Furthermore, experiences can be shared, which means that people can learn from each other's past experience.

From my observation the continuity process helps to make meaning from the new ideas that are experienced individually or collectively. For instance, as learners share their experiences in small groups or large groups, individual and collective learning takes place. There is active search and selection for 'relevant' experience that could be owned by a person or people from young age to adulthood. As people grow, they select what is meaningful and drop what is not during the growth process.

Humane Methods

Humane methods include, "emotions, attitudes, and mutual consultation, and convictions reached through persuasion" (Dewey, 1938, p. 30). During physical contact with an incident or as a person sees or hears something or feels something, a person will use her emotions to make judgments or draw conclusions. The type of conclusions that will be made will be based on how this person's emotions or attitudes are towards an incident to be judged. The conclusions that will be made will also be based on the meaning she will make from her perceptions regarding the incident. If a person decides to repeat a behavior, it will depend on attitudes towards what has to be repeated. Willingness to repeat desired experiences will also depend on other human traits, such as interest level, motivation, freedom, and needs. The urgency of the experience may also change the learner's behavior. For instance, solving a life and death problem will differ from solving a common and simple problem.

Negotiation

Negotiation involves the process of consultation between the experience and the person experiencing it, or between two people. Everyday people negotiate with the environment around them in order to make meaning of what they experience through their multiple senses. Negotiation is a very powerful idea in learning. It means that the learner is urgently reflecting on her past experiences in order to learn from them. Sometimes she learns from other people's ideas by comparing what she knows with what they do or say and then makes her own judgments or conclusions (Dewey, 1938).

What Dewey is saying, according to my interpretation, is that people use their senses and their free will to learn from the environment. They are the ones who are learning; however, it depends on the type of environment people live in. If it is an aggressive violent neighborhood, those who are growing up in or new to that type of an environment will learn from others how to be aggressive in order to protect themselves. Or if it is a caring and loving environment, it will be likely that people will also work hard to maintain that caring and loving atmosphere.

Reflection

Dewey (1938) says that a person reflects on the past experiences that must have been observed through the five senses or imagined. That is, one must have either seen an event happen or used abstract thinking to create an image. Abstract thinking involves imagination. That means some experiences can be imagined. For instance, imagining that one is in another country will bring good or bad ideas about that country.

Reflective thinking, according to Dewey, has the following phases:

A state of doubt, hesitation, perplexity, mental difficulty, in which thinking originates, and, an act of searching, hunting, inquiring, to find material that will resolve the doubt, settle and dispose of the perplexity.
(1933, p. 121)

The underlying assumption is that, one is not satisfied with the first solution to a problem. One has to think about how the first problem was solved, try other alternatives, ask questions like, " what if it happened differently? Or, how do you feel about this idea?" Getting 'insights' into the idea leads to learning. In the process of packing and unpacking the ideas, those that will make meaning to what she is learning

and the new learned information will become her own knowledge. She will have experienced the process of obtaining that knowledge.

For instance, using the example that was given by one of the administrators in Chapter 4, a Mosotho girl grows up being told how to take care of the family in preparation for her future life. When she gets married, she will probably think of what her parents told her and what she learned from the community. She will select those experiences which she values because they make sense to her and use them as her own knowledge.

I do not mean to deviate from the main discussion; however, Dewey (1933) believes that in order for effective reflection to take place, a person would also need to think about his/her attitudes and values because meaningful reflection goes with open-mindedness, whole-heartedness and responsibility (p. 122). Meaningful reflection leads to intellectual growth because as Dewey (1938) says, "experience is a moving force" (p. 122). Intellectually a person develops as he/she reconstructs ideas and rethinks experiences through in order to move to new ones.

Habit

Habit is another principle that relates to continuity. As people continuously return to past incidences, they become a habit. This means that every experience "enacted and undergone modifies the one who undergoes and modifies it, and affects the quality of subsequent experience" (Dewey 1938, p. 37). Experience becomes education only if it continues to grow and, in the habit making, some new ideas are added that lead to change. Dewey further points out that every experience influences the objective

conditions under which further experiences are had. For instance, if a person is learning how to read and gains reading skills, that new knowledge will widen her or his horizons. Once a person knows how to read, she will want to know how to write as well. One experience leads to another, forming a chain of experiences. An intriguing idea is the quality of the experience, which in turn influences the habit principle. If learners are exposed to quality experience, they are likely to work harder to achieve or maintain the standard.

Dewey (1938) writes that " the quality of the present experience influences the way in which the principle applies" (p. 37). Because of the element of continuity, and because during any experience, attitudes are formed, every experience helps to decide the quality of experiences that will be preferred in the future. What makes quality experience? Dewey (1938) indicates that quality experience depends on "agreeableness and disagreeableness" of experiences. It was not clear to me what makes a quality experience, but I believe that it may refer to the educative and relevant experience of any particular individual or group of people. Such experience becomes quality experience because people would have argued or debated about it with the purpose of improving on the idea some more. The debate, reflection, and decision-making that would take place would lead to a sound and effective action or conclusion.

Freedom

Freedom is another interesting principle that Dewey (1938) believes contributes to experiential learning. He says that education is a social process, and that, therefore, it must have interaction and free play. People feel free to interact if they feel safe and are

encouraged to do so and if they have appropriate skills to act. I, therefore, feel that students need to be empowered to explore the learning environment and make conclusions about their discoveries. It is the inner freedom that enables one to make judgment without fear, to evaluate desires by thinking of the consequences. Rogers (1980) supports Dewey by saying that inner freedom emancipates a learner from inner fears.

Concrete Environment

According to Dewey (1938), students' learning environments need to be the concrete, real, day-to-day experiences that they encounter. All people experience; and all learn through experience. So the environment plays a big role in the quality of experience one will have. In a classroom environment, students experience many good and bad learning approaches; it is therefore, mandatory for adult educators to expose students to more than one approach.

Summary

In this section, I have discussed Dewey's views regarding experiential learning theory as a teaching and learning method that helps both teachers and students to become actively involved in the classroom. Dewey's experiential learning theory is field-based learning because people learn by being in contact with the environment. According to this theory, every person (young and old) is learning from concrete experience. It means that experience is contextual and socially constructed because

people depend on what the surrounding environment offers, and what the society values and believes in.

Learning through experience puts a learner at the center of learning as she freely and rationally searches for knowledge. As she comes in contact with a problem, she actively reflects on it, makes decisions, reflects on new ideas, and acts. In the process of trying out new ideas, she individually and continuously uses her interests, values, beliefs, or habits of making decisions. She acts according to her own judgments of the problem, given that each person solves a problem differently from another person.

Key issues in Dewey's experiential learning are problem-solving, reflection that leads to another problem or decision, and action. The cycle is continuous, and it is built on negotiations, freedom, democracy and equality.

Therefore, when teaching adult students, educators need to start with students' experiences by introducing concrete problems or case studies, reflection, action, decision, search, and selection that would lead to another new action. Starting with student's experiences helps them to feel comfortable in a new school environment. The next two parts will discuss how other theories view experience in adult learning.

Part Two: Cognitive/Development, Andragogy Theory, and Kolb's Learning Model

In this section there are two sub-sections to be discussed. The first sub-section discusses Jean Piaget's ideas about cognitive development. Since he has written volumes about cognitive development, I am only concentrating on knowledge construction and experience in learning. The second sub-section will review andragogy

as discussed by Knowles (1970, 1984) and Lindeman (1951) in Brookfield (1987). Kolb's (1984) experiential learning model will also be discussed under this section.

Cognitive/ Development Theory (Piaget's Knowledge Construction)

Cognitive/developmental theorist, Jean Piaget (1974), is one of the most important thinkers in cognitive theory. Piaget writes about child psychology, but his thinking has guided learning in general (Tennant 1997). Cognitive theory deals with an individual's mental potentials (intelligence) and the subject to be learned. That is, the ability to critically think and make meaning based on experiences gained from the environment. Piaget's knowledge construction theory is relevant in this study because it further clarifies how the mental cognitive structures that Dewey mentioned earlier work on experience in order to turn it into meaningful knowledge.

Piaget (1974) is interested in mental activities. As Ginsburg and Opper (1988) say of his work, "intelligence is one kind of biological achievement, which allows the individual to interact effectively with the environment at a psychological level" (p. 13). A person has to interact with the environment in order for learning to take place. Since intelligence develops as a person biologically grows, it means that a person has to be mature enough to be able to use mental capacities as she learns from the environment. That is, the more mature one is, the better the interaction becomes. Interacting with the environment means one is active. That is why Piaget says that knowledge is not given to "a passive observer, rather knowledge of reality must be discovered and reconstructed by the child" (p. 14). For the purpose of this study, it means an adult learner needs to be

an active observer who realizes the situation she is in so that she can intelligently construct new knowledge.

New knowledge has to be acted upon and be internalized by the learner in order to ultimately own it. The learner has to adapt the new knowledge, which leads to an 'assimilating' and 'accommodating' relationship. "Assimilation involves the person's dealing with environment in terms of his structures, while accommodation involves the transformation of his structures in response to the environment" (Piaget, 1974, p. 15). The processes of accommodation and assimilation explain how the learner interacts with the environment and constructs knowledge. For example, the way I understand this explanation of accommodation and assimilation is that the learner uses her structures (intelligence, emotions, abilities) to make sense of the new knowledge that is gained from the environment. Then she transforms herself in order to respond accordingly.

She interacts with herself and the environment in order to make meaning. In the process, she needs to balance the new experiences with what she already knows in order to construct new knowledge, which is what Piaget calls "equilibrium." Piaget (1977) says that "knowledge is always the product of the interaction between assimilation and accommodation, that is, an equilibrium between the subject and the objects on which the knowledge rests" (p. 7). Like Dewey (1938), he says knowledge has to be worked upon by the learner in order to lead to growth and development.

Andragogy as Adult Learning Theory: Knowles and Lindeman Andragogy

Knowles (1970, 1984) and Lindeman (1951) in Brookfield (1987) differentiate between adult learners and children. Lindeman wrote before Knowles, but they are

grouped together because they agree in principle that adult education should be functional. It should consider the importance of the experiences that students already have. Lindeman, who seemed to respond to a large number of adult students that were then returning to college, believes that adult education is functional:

For Lindeman, as for Dewey, education was for growth in the direction of increased responsibilities, for the environment, for others, and for oneself, and the ability to experiment. Ability to use knowledge for social purposes constituted to the educated person. (Stubblefield, 1988, p. 148)

For both Lindeman and Knowles, andragogy is teaching adults; pedagogy is teaching young children. Both writers assume that adults learn from the experiences that they gain as they grow up and that an adult learner makes better choices than children. Merriam and Caffarella (1999) support the idea that recognizing and integrating adult experiences in learning supports adult learners (p. 222).

The characteristics of an adult learner based on the andragogical model as discussed by Knowles (1970) are as follows:

1. his self-concept moves from one of being a dependent personality toward one of being a self-directed human being;
2. he accumulates a growing reservoir of experience that becomes an increasing resource for learning;
3. his readiness to learn becomes oriented increasingly to the developmental tasks of his social roles; and
4. his time perspective changes from one of postponed application of knowledge to immediacy of application, and accordingly his orientation toward learning shifts from one of subject-centeredness to one of problem-centeredness. (Knowles, 1970, p. 39)

My intention is not to discuss the characteristics above, as they are self-explanatory. For instance, self-concept, the way I understand it, is the time when an

individual starts to treat herself as an adult. Her role in society is that of a person who makes decisions and has responsibility as a parent, a community leader, or a church leader. When such a person returns to college, her initial reaction maybe 'one of shock and disorganization.' This happens because she has been away from school for some time, and some of the activities are new to her. Or sometimes she brings an expectation, based on past experience, that she is going to be treated like a child. ¹

Regarding the assumption that adult students are a resource for learning, Knowles (1970) believes that, as these students return to college, they will not be ready to learn, but they will be coming with some experience that can contribute to their learning. Though Knowles is talking about American adult students, from my experience, the statement may be true to some extent in other parts of the world. At this stage students need some orientation to learning at college; they need help to regain their confidence. That is, there are complex issues like age, the last time such a learner was in school, and the way he/she obtained the High School Diploma. For instance, those candidates who obtained a High School General Certificate in Education (G. C. E.) through correspondence courses or by attending evening classes might not have the same level of academic knowledge as those candidates who went through a formal school.

¹ An appropriate phrase in Sesotho is, "*gnoana oa sekolo*," that is anybody who goes to school, regardless of age, grade or level in education. For instance an IEMS student can be called a school child. The expectation is for one to be obedient like a child in class.

Kolb's (1984) Experiential Learning Model

Kolb (1984) focuses on the concept of reflection on experience in the learning process. He, like Dewey (1938), defines experience as hands-on learning that starts with an experience and ends with new experience that might turn into new knowledge "because people learn from their experiences and the results for that learning can be reliably assessed and certified for college credit" (p. 4).

Kolb (1984) agrees with Dewey (1938) that experience without reflection is not learning. Reflection helps to bring out ideas, skills, and attitudes that must have been learned in the past. Reflection is the "ability for learners to think of their past experiences in order to learn from them" (Kolb, 1984, p. 6). The learner, when reflecting on the past with the help of the teacher, realizes that she has learned many skills and she has moved from where she was before. Such realization from the learner is so powerful that it leads to internal motivation, the desire to want to learn more and develop because she can now do things differently.

Kolb's Learning Model

Kolb (1984) designed a learning model based on Dewey and Vygotsky (the model is attached as Appendix C). The first two steps, the concrete experiential stage and reflective observation, deal with the learner's physical contact with experience. They are the perceiving and processing steps of the model (Kelly 1996). That is, a problem is sensed and the process of getting acquainted with it is starting. Questions that are asked are those that solicit more information concerning the problem, like what it means and what kind of feelings are experienced.

The third stage, abstract conceptualization, involves using ideas and logic to reach the solution. According to Kolb (1984), at this stage, the learner relies on 'systematic planning' in order to form new theories and ideas, that is, a step-by-step systematic method of learning. Tennant (1997) says this stage is academically appropriate because it is the level where the learner is more self-critical, creative, self-actualizing and uses higher order abstract thinking. The learner has reached a higher level of confidence and is more mature.

At the active-experimentation stage, the learner is implementing ideas that she thinks will work to solve a problem. This stage is hands-on, as learners are continuously and critically reflecting on the problem to be solved. According to Kolb (1984), the learner has to go through all the stages above in order to solve the problem at hand. Furthermore, according to Merriam and Caffarella (1999), this model has since been developed to include 'a planning for implementation' stage (p. 225). From my observation, models like this are not always followed in real life situations. Again, as already mentioned, experience involves a lot of attributes that determine the extent of the learner's participation and involvement. Sometimes it depends on the emotions, attitudes, and needs of the learners.

Critical Reflective Theorists and Experience

Mezirow (1991, 1995, 1996, 1998), Brookfield (1995, 1996), and Freire (1993) build their arguments on critical reflection, perspective transformation, and praxis. Dewey writes about the importance of reflection in learning from experience; Mezirow,

Brookfield and Freire point that experience has no significance without critical reflection and action by an individual or a group. Mezirow, Brookfield and Freire have added the word 'critical' to thinking because they believe that there is more sense that is acquired through critical reflective thinking than just reflective thinking. They think that it is essential to critically examine past experiences in order for learning, that leads to change and development, to take place. For instance, Mezirow (1998) writes that "a reflection as 'a turning back' can mean many things" (p. 185). For him it can mean "simple awareness of an object," or "letting one's thoughts wander." That is, in both cases reflection does not necessarily mean that assessment of the object is made. He points out that, with critical reflective thinking, the act of reflection could be 'explicit' or 'implicit.' According to him, the former would be influenced by the assumptions the learners hold. Such assumptions are based on learner's values or beliefs. The latter involves the ability of the lecturers to be aware of the choices the learners make, that is, what influences their choices and what are their outcomes based on? Mezirow's, Brookfield's, and Freire's individual views regarding critical reflective thinking and experience are discussed next.

Brookfield's (1995, 1996) Perspective on Critical Reflective Thinking

Brookfield's (1996) writing about critical reflective thinking focuses on the classroom. Like Dewey (1938), he says that a critical teacher or student focuses on 'hunted assumptions' during the process of critical reflection. The metaphor of 'hunting assumptions' is very strong as it involves searching, selecting and action to achieve a goal. For instance, a critically reflective teacher will question things like the seating

arrangement in the classroom, something that she might have gone through when she was in elementary school. She will want to try another method and see if it makes a difference in her teaching. For a teacher to be involved in critically reflective thinking, she will need to trust her instincts, be open-minded, responsible, and be willing to risk new ideas.

Brookfield's (1995) theory, among others, focuses on the following assumptions:

- 1) Paradigmatic assumptions deal with what people assume about adult learners. For example, they might assume that such a learner is self-directed, that critical thinking is an intellectual function characteristic of an adult life, and that good adult education processes are inherently democratic. Like Freire (1993), Brookfield believes that education always has a political dimension (p. 5). For instance, in an assumption that adults are self-directed learners, that would be a political statement in a case where decisions are still made by the lecturers or administrators without involving students. Or where resources are controlled and students are not able to use them freely.
- 2) Prescriptive assumptions deal with the teaching and learning processes of adult learners. That is, they deal with how an adult educator should teach and how an adult learner should learn based on some beliefs people have. For instance, if adult educators believe in active learning, teaching approaches will focus on active learning.

- 3) Causal assumptions deal with cause and effect. If teachers of adults use reflective critical thinking, adult learners will learn how to learn; and this will lead to lifelong learning. Or, if teachers make mistakes in front of students, they will create a safe learning environment because they demonstrate to students that it is normal to make mistakes.

Brookfield's assumptions are very relevant to this study because experience is built on assumptions that have meaning to people. I am aware, however, that some issues that are mentioned would need to be tested to see if they work in other cultures. For instance, if teachers of adults make mistakes in front of students, it might or might not create a safe learning environment. Some students might think that the teacher is not serious about her work or that she doesn't know the content.

Mezirow's Transformation Theory

Mezirow (1991, 1995, 1998), like Dewey (1938) and Lindeman (1951) in Brookfield (1987), writes about transformation theory. His writings are influenced by his interest in adult learning and concept of adult education. His theory is about how adults make meaning from their experiences. That is, how they use their mental processes in order to interpret the meaning they get from their experience. He indicates that "learning becomes possible because we interpret the meaning of each new sensory experience by imaginatively projecting images and value-laden symbolic models upon our sensory experience and, metaphorical inference, construe meaning" (Mezirow in Welton, 1995, p. 39).

According to Mezirow, "transformation theory maintains that human learning is grounded in the nature of human communication; to understand the meaning of what is being communicated-especially when intentions, values, moral issues, and feelings are involved-requires critical reflection of assumptions" (Mezirow, 1988, p. 188). That is, because human beings get involved in dialogue, it is possible for them to freely discuss. The discussion will, however, be controlled by whether the same language is used or the same symbols are used so that meaning is interpreted from the conversation.

He further explains transformation as being the same as Freire's conscientization theory because he says, " the process of transformation is the same as that which Paulo Freire has called 'conscientization.' It is a generic process of adult learning" (Mezirow, in Welton, 1995, p. 44). Freire's conscientization theory will be discussed later in this paper; however, the similarity that Mezirow is referring to in this case involves being critically aware of the situation and reflecting on it with the intention of making meaning or changing one's behavior depending on the issue that is discussed.

Transformation is further based on the following two concepts: 'meaning schemes' which are specific beliefs, feelings, attitudes, and value judgments, and 'meaning perspective' which is related to perspective transformation. The latter refers to meanings that a learner makes based on how she perceives the world. Critical reflection is an integral part. That is, there is need for a learner to critically reflect on her beliefs or feelings in order to learn from them. The interpretation of the past assumptions leads to transformation. That is, after the learner has critically examined what she feels and how she reached her feelings, she may change her meaning schemes; she may shift or change to some other new schemes. In the same vein, if the learner critically examines how she

perceives the environment around her, such a learner may change and use other new lenses of interpreting her environment.

The implication of Mezirow's transformation theory is that adult educators, if they use the theory, need to train and encourage learners to critically reflect on their assumptions. However, some writers like Tennant (1993) critique Mezirow's model in that it seems to focus on individuals. He points out that sometimes the 'distorted self' is the result of the societal, cultural norms, assumptions, and other crucial issues that a learner may not be in a position to discuss. The problem, according to Tennant, is that society has more power over the individual and changing the individual person may put pressure on her.

Other writers, like Clark and Wilson (1991), also point out that Mezirow's model focuses on an individual person who struggles with her beliefs, attitudes, and feelings to make meaning from them. Whereas I am aware of the criticisms that are leveled against Mezirow, what he is writing about is very important and relevant to this study because I am interested in different ways of helping the adult learner in Lesotho to learn from her experiences. I am looking for alternative ways of learning that will break the wall that seems to exist between theory and practice in the learning and teaching of the Certificate Program at IEMS. What is important is how critical reflective thinking helps the learner to critically examine her experiences in order to make meaning from them.

I am also aware that there is more to transformation learning theory than what I have in this section, but I understand it to mean that learning takes place through interpreting past experiences and making meaning from them with the purpose of

learning more. I am aware that the process of interpreting past experiences is made possible by intentional critical reflective thinking. It would be hard in a case where learners would not be interested in reviewing their assumptions or past beliefs. Or, if they strongly believe in their past assumptions about learning, they may not easily change. Again, as the data will confirm, teachers too, may not know how much freedom to give to learners to be involved in critical thinking, knowing that they too don't have it.

Freire's Perspective on Reflection, Action and Dialogue

Freire (1993) is writing for the emancipation of the oppressed and the poor people in Latin America. He focuses on the group's transformation through literacy more than an individual learner's change. His work is very relevant in this study because, like Mezirow and Brookfield, he emphasizes critical reflection on experience in order for a learner to learn from those experiences. He makes an observation that schools for adults are also oppressing the learners because teachers don't start where the learner is. He says that, " the teacher expounds on a topic completely alien to the existential experience of the students" (Freire, 1993 p. 52). That is, teachers of adults talk of real life as though it was something passive, or something not connected to day-to-day living activities. This is so because the teachers do not integrate the learners' experiences into the learning process to make learning real.

More than that, the way the learners are taught makes them receivers of knowledge that leads to the banking concept. He says that a narrative style of teaching makes teachers depositors of knowledge to the bank (the students), to withdraw it when

they (teachers) need it. In the banking analogy, the teacher is not involved in discussions with the students; she pours knowledge into the learner's head. The learner's role is that of a container that receives information, not someone who can react to ideas.

Furthermore, Freire points out that sometimes teachers do the banking intentionally; sometimes they are not even aware of it. Those who bank information intentionally may be influenced by their beliefs in teaching. They might believe that they are experts since they know more than the learner, and they have long experience in teaching the same content.

As a result, Freire (1993), like Mezirow (1991), Dewey (1938), and Brookfield (1996), is suggesting reflection as a way of helping the learner to be aware of the systems that oppress her and to take action that will lead to change in socio-economic systems. He says "true reflection leads to action" (p. 48). In defining praxis, he says, action and reflection together form praxis. It is more than just action; it is acting on another action in order to solve a problem and reach a conclusion. It means acting on another action which is more truthful because it will be obtained through communication and thinking. Words have to be used in order for true transformation to happen because Freire (1993) says that, "Human beings are not built in silence, but in word, in work, in action-reflection" (p. 69). The learner, as a human being, has the ability to experience reality in the world she lives in and takes action to free herself from any oppression in collaboration with other group members.

Like Brookfield (1996), Freire focuses on critical reflection that is based on dialogue and negotiation and problem solving. He believes that dialogue empowers people, especially the poor and the powerless people. However, Gore (1992) says,

"Empowerment is a key concept in this approach, which treats the symptoms but leaves the disease unnamed and untouched" (p. 98). That is, what I understand is that sometimes dialogue may not lead to action that Freire is advocating, especially if it is applied in the classroom because the teacher's power in the classroom outweighs that of the students.

University Without Walls Model

The University Without Walls is an alternative bachelor degree program of the University of Massachusetts (UMass). It is based on Dewey's experiential learning theory. Its philosophy is that learning is continuous, it does not stop. Part of the UWW's philosophy statement reads as follows:

Yet we learn in every context, not just in school or in college. We learn as workers, as partners, as people engaged and interested in our world. We learn to do, to understand, to appreciate, to solve, and to know. We are all learners then, UWW staff, faculty, and students alike. (The UWW Student Handbook, p. 1)

The University Without Walls' course description (Appendix E) will show that the curriculum includes three required courses. Moreover, prior learning works well with an individualized degree program. Individualized degree program is a program that each student at UWW is assisted to plan, and design in order to write her prior learning experiences or prior learning portfolio.

Admission criteria lead to Massachusetts' bachelor's degree (BA, or BSc) depending on the choice of the students. Applicants can enroll through the general University requirements. Other ways in which a student can enroll include:

- Transfer credit from other colleges (up to 75 credits).
- Credit for prior learning.
- CLEP tests (College level Examination Program).
- University courses and the Five college courses of UMass.
- Special transcript evaluation (Students' transcript is evaluated).

From the University Without Walls' Prior Learning Handbook, and from the discussions I had with some UWWs' lecturers, I learned that emphasis in giving a university credit is put on the knowledge and skills that a student acquired from her experiences: "If a student has worked for many years in a field, has completed a range of tasks, and has assumed increasingly responsible positions, it is safe to say that the experiential foundation of a prior learning portfolio is present" (UWW Prior Learning Handbook, p. 10). I also learned that, in the writing course, students are guided to describe what they learned, emphasizing the meaning and the knowledge they gained from the experiences. There are three levels in awarding the credit because the UWW believes that people differ in "range and length of experiences as well as in complexity of thinking about that experience" (UWW Prior Learning Handbook, p. 10). Each level and how many credits it carries are contained in Appendix G.

Writing skills are very important in the Credit for Prior Learning Program, as a result, the course "Perspective on Learning" is offered in the first semester to prepare the students for writing a Prior Learning Portfolio the following semester.

Summary

Piaget's constructivism theory views the learner as an internally active information processor. A learner understands knowledge based on how she constructs and re-forms it in order to own it as her new experience. In the construction process, the learner uses her intellectual structures, but the quality of information processing will differ depending on the individual's prior learning, motivation, readiness/maturity and psychomotor skills.

Knowles (1980) and Lindeman (1951 in Brookfield 1987) emphasize the importance of experience that learners bring to the learning environment. Lindeman says that experience is the foundation or the main resource for adult learning. It deals with learning that is based on day-to-day social life experiences. Therefore, adult education should be socially based. Knowles confirms what Lindeman says by describing an adult learner as someone whose rich experience should be considered as a learning resource. Such experience should be integrated into the curriculum of adults so that what they learn is not different from what they do in real life situations. Adult Education needs to be improving adult learners' daily activities.

An adult learner is described as a self-directed learner, someone whose learning is problem oriented and based on long or short-term goals. This implies that college learning requires the use of different teaching learning approaches in order to meet learners' requirements. It is, therefore, important to introduce adult learners to alternative learning approaches such as experiential learning approaches.

Critical pedagogy does not defy experience; what it does is to make it more valid through reflection. That is, for people to learn from their experience, they need to

critically examine what they already believe in. They need to question their assumptions with the purpose of expanding on what they already know. For instance, Brookfield's critical reflective thinking theory questions assumptions that both teachers and students bring to the class situation. Such questions seek a reason, or force learners to think, make decisions, and act. Brookfield makes educators of adults aware that critical reflection is not an easy thing to do. It needs a lot of practice. It is not easy to assess oneself. In Sesotho, people say that it is not easy to point a finger at oneself and keep it straight. It becomes crooked.

Mezirow, like Brookfield, bases his discussion on experience and critical reflective thinking that leads to action and development. He discusses transformation theory that is built on meaning schemes which are the beliefs, interests and attitudes, and perspective transformation which is how a learner interprets the world using different lenses. He further points out that in both meaning schemes and perspective transformation, critical reflective thinking is needed in order to interpret meaning. Learners need to be assisted to reflect on their assumptions in order to learn from them and change those that need to be changed for development purposes.

Freire is focusing on praxis, critical reflective thinking, and dialogue. The way he explains praxis is double action because it is acting on what one acted on before. The purpose is to free oneself from oppressive circumstances that are caused socially, historically, economically, politically or otherwise. For him, people, especially the poor, should be helped to empower themselves in order to emancipate themselves from oppression.

In the classroom, adult learners are also encouraged to be critical of what they learn. They need to talk about how they learn and how to change if they feel that change is needed. That is, they need to have negotiation skills in order to approach a teacher as an authority in the classroom. However, learners cannot make any changes if their teachers do not give them that opportunity to challenge the status quo. University Without Walls model is a good model that shows application of the theories discussed above, particularly Dewey's experiential learning theory.

Part Three: Experiential Learning Approaches

The literature review explores those approaches that are experiential in nature and are used to help adult students improve their learning. The majority of the approaches relate to the theories that I discussed in part two. This section is divided into two sub-sections. Sub-section one discusses approaches that are individualistic and humanistic. They are grouped into: (a) field based experiences, (b) prior learning assessment, and (c) experiential applications for personal development. Sub-section two discusses critical thinking approaches and feminist approaches.

Humanistic Approaches

Field-Based Experiences. According to Lee and Caffarella (1994), field-based experiences were introduced in the 1930s. The purpose was to introduce active learning to adults in the classroom. Active learning is hands -on learning in the classroom. Learners are given a chance to demonstrate what they have learned by demonstrating their skills. Sometimes students do field-based projects that are organized and structured

by their teachers in collaboration with organizations for which the students will work.

The purpose is to help the learners obtain credit for what they learned experientially.

In field-based experiences, teachers play a role in planning projects, supervising learners, and evaluating their work (Lewis & Caffarella, 1994). Teachers organize dialogue sessions which focus on the activities done in the community. The teacher also encourages the learners to keep a journal or other written reflections as a way of keeping a record of what they do on a day-to-day basis. Experiential learning strategies in this part include:

- a) Internships and practicum assignments for careers like nursing and teaching. According to Lee and Caffarella (1994) internships and practicum mean "learning through supervised, practical experience within one or more relevant real-world settings" (p. 52). Learners learn through observing demonstrations by expert or professionals. These demonstrations are followed by group discussions; the purpose is to reflect on what happened. Students also get involved in demonstrating the skills that they learn from the internships. Lee and Caffarella point out that the advantage of internships or practicum assignments is that learners gain "theory and understanding" in the classroom and later follow it with "practical application."
- b) Cooperative education, in which students alternate periods of full-time study and on-the-job training. According to Bennet (1977), cooperative education has to do with

work experience education in all its various forms, is the combination of traditional ways of college study with on-the-job experiences organized in educational institutions so that benefits from the multitude of learning opportunities available in business, industry, and public agencies become an integral part of a more comprehensive, career-oriented college education (p. 5)

Wilson (1978) adds that cooperative education is "an educational strategy; it involves students in productive work; and it is an element of the curriculum" (p. 2). According to both Bennet (1977) and Wilson (1978), cooperative education was conceived mainly to provide work opportunities that are intended to be learning experiences. Productive work means students must provide service to the employer. Students do part-time work and school work, during the day and take evening classes.

Davidson and Worsham (1992) write about cooperative learning in the classroom. They say that in a cooperative learning process,

procedures are designed to engage students actively in the learning process through inquiry and discussion with peers in small groups. The group work is carefully organized and structured so as to promote the participation and learning of all the group members in a cooperatively shared undertaking. (p. xii)

Davidson and Worsham point out that cooperative learning does not mean only putting learners in groups, it means teaching social skills, team-building, and I add group loyalty for the group to do the work, collaboratively. I include Davidson and Worsham's definition in this study because it better distinguishes between cooperative education and cooperative learning.

- c) Service learning, in which students do community service projects.

Learners are encouraged to volunteer their time to do community work because it is believed that during the volunteer process, they get a chance to learn more about the community that they are working with. Baltiston (1997) adds that the purpose of service learning is to encourage democratic citizenship, participation, reflective and judgmental abilities, problem solving, imagination, and communication skills. As students get involved with community members, they come across problems that need to be solved, communicate with the people, and report this to their teachers in writing. Baltiston (1997) points out that civic approaches to service learning encourage " an educational partnership between schools and community" (p. 16).

Experiential Applications for Personal Development and Classroom-Based Learning

This category includes organized, sponsored, and performed experiences that attempt to introduce active learning in classroom situations. Real life activities are thought of and performed in the classroom through simulations, critical incidents, socio-drama, etc. The purpose of these activities is to help learners to exercise their thinking abilities. Chickering (1981, in Lewis & William 1994, p. 9) believes that "by stretching the learner's ability to deal with moral complexity, experiential learning becomes a vehicle for adult development by helping learners reach new levels of cognitive, perceptual, behavioral, and symbolic complex."

In a way, the activities in this category help learners to role-play their day-to-day experiences in the classroom with the understanding that real application of the problem solving will be done by the individual learner. Role-plays, drama, and simulations help learners to prepare for life situations under the supervision of the teacher. Learners are also introduced to problem solving that is done collaboratively because simulations and socio-drama involve teamwork (Lewis & William 1994). Lee and Caffarella (1994) add more techniques to this category, such as listening groups, demonstration within a return demonstration (this involves a resource person demonstrating a job or a skill, and then the learners performing the skill immediately after the demonstration), games, case studies, concrete incidents based on past experiences, modeling, theory building, and metaphor construction (these involve construction of maps about an idea of interest, using bricklaying as a metaphor) (p. 46-49).

Collaborative Learning. Collaborative learning was not initially thought of in this study, but to leave it out would not make sense because it is learner initiated and not teacher initiated; which is what the whole study is focusing on. To define collaborative learning would be confusing because, from the literature review, it seems to have different definitions depending on who is writing about it. However, according to Bruffee (1999) and Flannery (1994, in Bosworth, Sharon, & Hamilton 1994), collaboration means groups of students that are formed to solve a problem that a teacher might have raised in a lecture room, unlike cooperative education, that is teacher-centered, as in the example above. Gerlach (in Bosworth, Sharon, & Hamilton, 1994) add that "collaborative learning is based on the idea that learning is a naturally social act in which the participants talk among themselves. It is through the talk that learning

occurs" (p. 8). He further points out that as participants talk about their views, their beliefs, and their ideas, they share with others through social interaction. Learning takes place as a result of the interactions as participants think and reflect on what other participants say.

Credit for Prior Learning. Harris (1977) defines prior learning as " what adults bring to the learning environment" (p. 114). Prior learning is the experience that adults gain out of school, which is not planned, supervised, or evaluated for purposes of credit. Michelson (1998) writes that, as more adults enrolled in higher learning, structured innovations that included the assessment for prior learning were implemented. For instance, the Council for the Cooperative Assessment of Experiential Learning (CAEL) was formed. The role of CAEL has been to set standards for credit for prior learning to give it value, validity, and recognition in the academic world. CAEL, according to Harris (1977) and Sille, Valentine, Strange, Serling, and Ward (1980), deal with issues of standards and assessments. The assessment focused on learning that was gained from experience. According to Harris (1977), a general guide for assessing credit for prior learning was designed by CAEL in the 1970s; however, each institution had a mandate to design its own specific guidelines.

Mann (1998) indicates that there are three basic approaches that are used to award credit for prior learning in the U.S. They are tests, evaluation of non-college sponsored training, and assessment of individualized portfolios. Wolf (1993) in MacIsaac and Jackson defines a portfolio as

the structured documented history of a carefully selected assembly of coached or mentored accomplishments substantiated by materials (artifacts and attestations)

that represent a learner's work. These materials are accompanied by description explanations, and commentaries in which the learner defines, describes, and reflects on the accomplishments represented in the portfolio. (1994, p. 64)

The teacher assists the learners in assessing their own learning and developing a better understanding of how their learning relates to an academic degree. During the portfolio development and assessment processes, the teacher is actively involved; as a result, she is also learning from the learners' experiences. She also explains the procedures that students have to follow and provides them with relevant materials such as guides for prior learning assessment. However, the learning is entirely in the hands of the students as they prepare the portfolio, self-evaluate, analyze and synthesize their work. There is a lot of dialogue between the learners and their peers during the preparation process, which varies among programs. Learners learn how to evaluate each other, how to write succinctly, how to organize their materials, and how to reflect on their past experiences in order to build their competency areas. These are rare skills to be obtained in a traditional school (Mann, 1998; Harris, 1977; MacIsaac and Jackson, 1994).

Critical Thinking Approaches

Critical Reflective Thinking Approaches. Approaches that are included in this section are those approaches that focus more on groups or teamwork than on individual activities in order to solve a problem. Their purpose is to help community people take a lead in initiating and solving their problems or to help an individual to reflect on her past beliefs, attitudes, or assumptions in order to make meaning from them with the purpose of assessing their usefulness or uselessness in her life. Introducing them in the

classroom situation might help the learners critically reflect on what they learn and determine how what they learn benefits them. Strategies that fall in this category include:

- i. Critical reflection (Brookfield, 1996)
- ii. Mezirow's (1991) model for perspective transformation
- iii. Dialogue and conscious raising and praxis (Freire, 1993).

Brookfield (1996, 1980) puts emphasis on how teachers of adults should teach so that both teachers and students can reflect on their classroom activities. It is hoped that if the learners can learn how to be critically reflective, they will apply their new skills at work or at home. Brookfield (1996) suggests approaches that he calls "lenses" that, if included in the teaching and learning of an adult learner, encourage critical reflective thinking. These lenses are:

- a) "Autobiographies": they are teaching logs, learning audits, role model profiles, memos, videos, and peer observation. These help the instructor to know what she is doing in the classroom.
- b) "Our students' eyes": In this case, Brookfield suggests learning journals in the classroom. In such journals students write their reflections about classroom activities. Other techniques include things like portfolios, participant learning, troubleshooting periods, letters to successors and survival keynotes.
- c) "Our colleagues' Perceptions": Teachers can allow other teachers (colleagues) to observe and reflect on their work and comment on their teaching and learning processes after the observation. The sharing of

perceptions can be an advantage to all because everybody concerned will have a chance to learn from each other's ideas. Using colleagues as lenses in the classroom requires trustfulness and open-mindedness from both teachers. Such qualities will help to avoid defensiveness.

- d) "Literature" is another lens that is very powerful. Instructors have to read often so as to learn about new reflective methods and other methods that have been researched that might help to improve learning.

Brookfield (1996) observes that critical reflective thinking is "very personally grounded in experiences with a very emotional component to it"(p.5). It will be important for adult educators to know how to handle the emotions.

Mezirow's (1991) transformation theory has two dimensions: transforming meaning schemes (beliefs, attitudes and emotional reactions), and meaning perspective, which involves being critically aware of assumptions that influence people's actions. Perspective transformation helps people to make decisions, to change the old behaviors and to get involved with a more "inclusive discriminating and integrative perspective" (p. 167).

Mezirow (1991) has designed the following perspective transformation phases as effective in the teaching and learning of an adult learner. Cootenay, Merriam, and Reeves (1998) add that the phases help the learners to improve on problem solving; however, many writers feel differently about it. My reason to have this model here is to give the readers, especially some Basotho lecturers, a chance to learn about it and maybe to experiment with it in their teaching practices:

- 1) A disorientating dilemma.
- 2) Self-examination with feelings of guilt or shame.
- 3) A critical assessment of epistemic, sociocultural, or psychic assumptions.
- 4) Recognition that one's discontent and process of transformation are shared and that others have negotiated a similar change.
- 5) Exploration of options for new roles, relationships, and actions.
- 6) Planning of a course of action.
- 7) Acquisition of knowledge and skills for implementing one's plans.
- 8) Provisional trying of new roles.
- 9) Building of competence and self confidence in new roles and relationships;
- 10) A reintegration into one's life on the basis of conditions dictated by one's new perspective. (p. 169)

Freire (1993) believes in dialogue as an important tool of learning. He says that genuine dialogue encourages people to communicate with the purpose of solving a problem. In such a conversation, people listen to each other, and they willingly get involved in deep discussions. As people dialogue, everybody is given a chance to think, to speak, and to be involved in the meaning-making process. Everybody can name and become a subject in discussion, not an object that is part of what is being discussed. Everybody is able to talk because there is equality of power in genuine dialogue; that is, people are equally able to say something about a problem at hand. Equality of power may be used relatively in this case because power is always with people; it depends on how it is used.

Dialogue theory is key to self-awareness; it leads to action that "does not impose, does not manipulate, does not domesticate, and does not sloganize" (Freire, 1993, p. 149). Through dialogue, everybody is free to suggest her opinion, and the listener also listens with the purpose of responding. In real dialogue, both teachers and learners are learning from each other without one feeling the boss over another. They meet "to name the world in order to transform it" (p. 148). Naming the world is what

transformation is all about. Learners should be able to give meaning to what is happening around them. To name means one has authority and power.

Freire (1993) advocates for a process like participatory action research (PAR), which he encourages to be used in the investigation of the problems encountered by poor people in developing countries. Participatory action research empowers minority groups because dialogue emanates from the groups and not from the top down. Another factor is that while it is still cyclical and systematic like other methods of research, participants take responsibility in decision-making roles. PAR follows Dewey's (1938) continuity idea because one idea leads into another. There is a multitude of writings on PAR that people can read to understand, for example Hall (1992).

Other methods that put the learner in the center of learning are Chamber's (1994) participatory rural appraisal (PRA). This approach relates to PAR and is appropriate for community development activities that emanate from the people. An outsider acts as a facilitator to help the community people identify their problem, to make suggestions as to how to overcome their problems, and to act on the problems based on their suggested solutions. Like PAR above, PRA also involves a lot of cyclical learning, reflection, and action.

Summary and Review of the Next Chapter

This chapter had three parts. The first part dealt with Dewey's (1938) experiential learning theory, knowing about how adults learn. The second part examined andragogy (Knowles, 1980; Lindeman, 1951 in Brookfield, 1987) as a philosophy of teaching adults. Kolb's (1984) experiential learning model was also discussed in this

section. The third focused on critical reflective thinking and transformation and action by theorists like Mezirow (1991, 1995, and 1998); Brookfield (1996); Freire (1993). I also included the University Without Walls model because it is experientially based.

The last part of the literature review discussed experiential leaning approaches that can be applied in the classroom for an adult learner in order to make learning more experiential. The chapter that follows explains the methodology and data collection, data management, analysis and interpretation.

CHAPTER 3

DESIGN AND RESEARCH METHODS

The purpose of the study has been to investigate Experiential Learning Theory, focusing on the Institute of Extra Mural Studies' (IEMS) Certificate Program in Adult Education. The intention was to find out how people understood experiential learning approaches, whether experiential learning approaches can be integrated into the Certificate Program, and if the Credit for Prior Learning Program can be implemented at the Certificate Program level. The study also focused on barriers and possibilities to implementing such a program.

Chapter 1 introduced the whole study. It discussed the background, the problem, the significance of the study, data collection, and the main findings. In this chapter, the discussion is on the design and research methods that were used in the study. The focus is on the site and population selection, research methods, the questions, data management, my role as researcher, and ethical issues. Major changes in the research design in each section will be discussed at the time that the design is described.

The Setting

The plan was to collect data in my country, Lesotho. The setting that was selected was IEMS, an extension arm of the National University of Lesotho, the only University in the country. IEMS is located in Maseru, the capital town of Lesotho, in order to be accessible to all the people who may want to utilize its services or facilities. The IEMS, a red-bricked, security-fenced building is about 10 kilometers to the south of

Maseru along Main South One road. Not far from IEMS are several primary schools, high schools, the National Teacher Training College, and the Lesotho Distance Teaching Center.

The focus is on the teaching and learning in the Certificate Program because it is the beginning class. I feel that if learning approaches are strong at the beginning, learning and teaching will be easier at the higher levels. My experience has shown that adult students' return to college, especially Certificate students at IEMS, needs to be treated with sensitivity because their academic status is at different levels. Some students take time before they join college after gaining their high school diplomas. Some get their diplomas through correspondence schools where students learn individually and may hardly practice experiential learning approaches. Therefore, I believe that in order to reach their different levels, they need to be exposed to a variety of approaches like experiential learning approaches.

My proposed plan to study the Certificate Program of IEMS was not changed in this case, but arriving at IEMS after two and a half years absence was like I was arriving at a new place altogether. This was the time after the looting of Maseru, including IEMS. As a result, I found many physical changes. For instance, all the IEMS buildings were surrounded by electric wire for security purposes. The main entrance that faced the road was closed, and there were new buildings outside the fence of the main buildings. To a new person, these buildings looked like they were not part of IEMS. I was assigned an office in one of these new buildings.

Participants and the Criteria for Selection

The study population was going to be men and women who enrolled in the Certificate in Adult Education Program for the 1999/2000 academic year. Other participants would include the teachers who teach in this program, administrators of the program, and some community people as policy makers. The latter would fill out a questionnaire and they would automatically be part of the study if one of their employees (IEMS student) was selected for the focus group.

Each year about 40 students are admitted to Certificate One, and about 30 proceed to Certificate Two. I would ask for three students from each class to make a total of six students who would meet the following criteria: They would be engaged in community-based work, or any non-formal or formal work, or be street vendors, that is, self-employed. I also wanted a mix of sexes and ages. Participants would also represent the rural, foothills and urban areas of Lesotho. Finally, their place of residence was to be located at a place where they could travel to IEMS where we would meet as a focus group.

I managed to have six students as planned, three from Certificate One and another three from Certificate Two. There were three males and three females. Two females came from Certificate Two and one came from Certificate One. This was the opposite in the case of men. Two came from Certificate One and one from Certificate Two. The arrangement worked to the advantage of the study because both sexes were equally represented.

I explained the selection criteria for the focus group when I introduced my study during the first classroom visits to both Certificate groups. In Certificate Two, the

lecturers facilitated the selection process based on the criteria that I discussed earlier and submitted the names of those who wanted to be part of the focus group. I was glad that I didn't do the selection in both classes because many of the students wanted to participate and that fact made the selection difficult. For instance, in Certificate One, I had to stress the importance of commitment in our meetings and that helped as some students dropped out because they could not afford to come to IEMS the whole month.

The six teachers who teach in the program would be asked to volunteer their time. The interview would be tape-recorded, and I had planned for each interview to last 1.5 hours meaning a total of 9 hours of interviews with the six teachers. The teachers would be asked to sign a consent form. (This form is attached in appendix D). This form would be signed after a discussion of expectations and relationships; that is, what participants would expect from the study.

Six lecturers participated in the study as planned. Three (two males and one female) were part-time lecturers and three (two females and one male) were full-time members of the staff. All the lecturers were given a consent form to read before the interviews started. I also explained why I was using qualitative research methods; that is, I was expecting that people would participate in conversational interviews.

In the consent form it is written that after reading, interviewees should sign the form to show that they willingly agreed to be interviewed. However, many lecturers, for some reason, did not sign the consent form. There could be a few explanations to such behavior. For instance, the signature could have more implications to them than just responding to the questions, or it might be that some people did not see the importance of signing. Again, culturally, Basotho people are not used to signing papers for

agreements that they make, no matter how important. They believe in witnesses, especially if a chief was involved. That act of not signing was changed by the introduction of Christianity. Rubin and Rubin (1995) confirm the concern that the researcher's request for interviewees to sign the consent form may be puzzling, especially in qualitative research, where both the interviewer and the interviewee would be involved in conversation.

Another six hours of interviews or tapes would be needed for the administration staff. The administration staff interviewed would be the head of the Division, one of the professors that had been involved in the IEMS program, the Deputy Director, the Assistant Registrar, the coordinator of the Certificate Program, and the Director. All the interview sessions would be taped. However, the administrators would not be asked to sign a consent form.

What happened was four administrators participated in the study, including one person from the Faculty of Education administration. This person was included because some of the adult education programs that IEMS runs belong to the Faculty of Education. IEMS has been asked to run them because of several reasons. One of them is that IEMS has the expertise in teaching and administering such programs. The Faculty presents the recommendations that come from IEMS to the Senate as their own.

The interview time for administrators differed according to the amount of time each person had. I went into the field already with some knowledge that interviewing elites is informative because they know more about policy issues. But, it is hard to schedule interview time. Also, the time for actual interview is normally short because they have a tight schedule (Rossman and Rallis, 1998).

Another plan was to have a meeting with IEMS administration staff, especially the Adult Education Division, in order to discuss preliminary findings and also to learn their opinions about experiential learning approaches. The plan was not implemented because there was not enough time, and some people seemed to be under pressure. I may be wrong to assume that they were pressured, but the fact was that they had just finished processing of the examinations in June, and they were already teaching new classes in August.

Data Collection Methods

The plan was to use a qualitative research approach because of its "quintessentially interactive" quality (Rossman & Rallis, 1998, p. 20). That is, it is in this kind of approach where the researcher becomes part of the process, where she/he can keep making decisions and changing them based on how things go in the field. This approach allows for the use of intuition, congruent with experiential learning, as the researcher constructs knowledge from the collected data because questioning continues even during the analysis stage. The researcher keeps on questioning his/her assumptions. More importantly, the interviewed person is given all the respect and trust that he/she deserves.

The qualitative research strategies that I planned to use included interviews and class observation. The latter strategy was going to be supplemented by video camera and still pictures. I also planned to use IEMS official documents that contained important information, such as annual reports. The three methods would help me to triangulate, thereby, making the collected data more valid and credible. I had planned to

use the video-tape carefully, knowing that sometimes it might disturb discipline in the classroom, or some lecturers would not feel comfortable being video-taped.

Interviews

I had intended to use in-depth interviews. As Creswell (1994) points out, interviews are the best methods in data collection because one talks to participants and listens to their opinions about what is happening. In this case, I would ask guided, open-ended questions that would allow flexibility and give respondents a chance to feel free to expand on the issues.

What surprised me was that during the interviews, I seemed to change the plan in the middle of the interviews. In some cases I became loud in trying to explain the concepts. In other cases, I changed to a dialogue approach; that is, I found myself involved in dialogue/conversation with some interviewees, particularly the administrators and some lecturers. I used standard, guided, and open-ended questions at the beginning of the interviews or when I was interviewing the students. At times the switch from one approach to the other worried me. I wondered if what I was doing was still valid and I emailed some of my professors from the study site. I was glad of what I did because I got help that motivated me to continue.

What I learned, though, was that sometimes one has to make use of all that one knows in order to succeed. For instance, sometimes things were not as straight as they appeared in the plan. In some cases, I had to change the plan when I was already interviewing a participant. For instance, sometimes I wouldn't know how much time I

would have to spend with some of the administrators, so I had to decide as I was interviewing what to ask and what to skip.

The reality in the field required me to use my intuition most of the time. That is, I had to decide how much I needed to explain without boring people or even lecturing to them. I had to be sensitive to the fact that some people might genuinely want to know more about the concepts so that they could answer the questions intelligently. Moreover, I had to be careful that, in explaining the concepts, I was not being biased and I was not influencing the participants to take my side. Fontana and Frey (1994) point out that an interviewer should not make his/her opinion known to the interviewees to give the participants a chance to answer freely and without any influence.

Interview Protocol. The plan was to start with the interviews in mid- June and continue through mid-September. I was to start with preliminary interviews to find out if the concepts were familiar or if I would have to change the questions that I planned to ask.

The first week in the field went by before I knew it. I found myself spending most of the time socializing, trying to re-gain relationships and making acquaintance with the new members in the Institute. Rossman and Rallis (1998) confirm the importance of entry in the field and the necessity of spending some time in order to establish relationships. I also wanted to know if the Certificate Program was still running as I used to know it. However, it was not easy to meet with the key people (the administrators) because they were still busy with the processing of examinations. Again, the majority of the people in general were still talking a lot about what had happened in Lesotho as a result of political conflicts. The school had just closed for winter holidays.

I had planned to conduct each interview for 1.05 hours per person, and I would use a tape recorder in the process. Tape recording the interviews would help me to avoid wasting a lot of time in writing the responses. I would only keep short notes that would remind me of important issues that would need follow up. The plan was to also have trained research assistants who would interview some students. Since there would be six students, their interview hours would make a total of 9 hours. The interview times would be arranged such that the meetings would not inconvenience the participants.

The idea to employ research assistants was dropped from the plan because it became clear that a qualitative research approach needs the researcher to be doing the interviews. Research assistants might not notice the important themes during the interview, more so because I was not going to follow a structured interview.

I was going to call people to arrange for the meeting and the venue when I reached IEMS. However, I had already planned to make contacts with some IEMS administrators even before I left my study site. It was important to notify the administrators ahead of time because I was going to go to the field from June to August. That is winter in Lesotho. As mentioned earlier, this would be time when some faculty and students would be away for winter vacations.

I also wanted to include the students' voices in the recommendations of the study. According to Rossman and Rallis (1998), a main trick in focus group discussion is "to promote participants' talk through the creation of a permissive environment" (p. 135). My plan was to form a focus group. Such a group would meet after class observation as well as after individual students' interviews. Videotapes from the observation sessions would help to facilitate the discussions during the meetings. Each

discussion meeting would take an hour, and it would be video taped as well and re-played for the group to view and comment again.

The plan worked accordingly in this case; however, the meeting time for the focus group changed. We could not meet after class observations because there was not enough time. We used Saturdays, days that were not scheduled for classes. The venue was not changed; we all met at IEMS, in my office. The new plan inconvenienced the students and me because it meant that we didn't have free weekends. The students were assisted by being reimbursed for their travel expenses. They were also given a small amount of money for lunch because they ate breakfast snacks in the morning before we started the discussions.

Another thing that changed was the time for the meeting. It took more than an hour because we started at 9.00 a.m. and stopped at 12.00 noon or sometimes 12.30 p.m, depending on whether or not we had finished the day's work. Saturday meetings were advantageous because we had enough time to discuss the issues and understand them. It gave us time to build trust among us, especially for the new students in Certificate One who didn't know anybody.

In viewing the tapes, the students had time to look at themselves on the screen. The first viewing session was spent discussing what they saw, that is, who appeared on the screen, what was the class activity, and where they all sat in the class. The rest of the viewing involved discussion of the approaches used in the classroom, how the learners were participating, and how could the lectures be changed such that the learners were at the center of learning.

It was interesting to listen to students talk about their behaviors in different courses. That is, in some courses, they were more active than in others. Some of the students seemed to enjoy those tapes in which they were participating in group discussions more than those in which they listened to the teachers' lectures.

Grand Tour Questions

I had planned to go into the field with some grand tour questions that would help me to get started. My intention was to have a conversational interview where the participants would be free to talk. The grand tour questions were to focus on four main themes as follows:

1. Experiential learning theory concept: how people understand experience, including principles like freedom, democracy, and equality in the classroom.
2. Approaches to experiential learning theory and their usefulness to an adult learner and the Institute of Extra Mural Studies.
3. Credit for Prior Learning Assessment as a program to be implemented in the Certificate Program, and
4. What barriers would be encountered if the Credit for Prior Learning Program were to be implement in the Certificate Program.

Based on these themes, I had planned to sub-divide the questions into the following three categories:

Question One. How do you understand experiential learning theory? How do you define experience? How do you understand freedom, democracy, and equality in the classroom?

Question Two. Which experiential learning approaches are practiced in the Certificate in Adult Education Program? To what extent are the approaches integrated into the Certificate Program? If approaches like service learning, cooperative learning, internships, and practicum assignments, field-based experiences (role-plays, drama) and credit for prior learning, and critical reflective thinking approaches, are implemented, which could be implemented without changing University policies? How would you support the implementation of the approaches above, especially the Credit for Prior Learning Program? How would such a program be called? How would it be assessed?

Question Three. What would be barriers to implementing experiential learning approaches? How would such barriers be overcome? What would be your opinion if students who enroll in the Certificate in Adult Education Program would present their projects through the use of stories, drama, pictures, or artifacts? Would you like to add something to what we have said?

The questions were asked as they appear above; what changed was the wording and emphasis. I learned from the pre-test that some people did not understand what experiential learning theory was, but when I focused on experience alone, I got responses. I, therefore, phrased the question as follows: How do you understand experience? In some cases I added 'in general' because some people would still ask, "experience?" as though to say "what do you mean?" However, a question on

experiential learning theory was asked to those participants who seemed to have an idea about what the concept meant.

What seemed necessary to worry about was asking people about democracy, freedom, and equality. Since the latter concepts were taken as political words, they seemed to confuse many people, especially when they were asked in relation to teaching in the classroom. To me, the interview section was the most interesting, I noticed people taking time to think about words they thought they knew but found difficult to explain.

Language used in the interview made the section more interesting. I must admit that I had not seriously thought about language because I thought I would use the English language. I had only thought of the students, that they might have problems answering in English. I began to think hard when some of the administrators started to respond in Sesotho language. What I did was mix the two languages for terms that were not easily translatable or for those that did not have corresponding words. For instance, the word experience can be '*tsebo*' or '*litsebo*.' The problem with the two words, which actually mean the same thing except that they are in different tenses, can also mean knowledge. That is, in English there are two different words: knowledge and experience; however, in Sesotho, there is only one word: '*tsebo*.' Because of the differences, I did not change the word experience to Sesotho, I asked people in Sesotho but words like experience were still used. The advantage was that everybody understood what I wanted, but I may not be sure if what they answered really referred to experience or knowledge. Even if they did, there is no significance difference of semantics between both words in Sesotho language.

Translation is not an easy thing to do; even though I managed to accomplish it, I had difficulty with some sentences. Due to lack of corresponding words, my sentences in Sesotho language became longer, and I worried about distorting the meaning of some main concepts. This problem occurred when I had to explain a concept like Credit for Prior Learning Assessment. However, the pre-test for employers helped because I had the questionnaire written in Sesotho, and the pre-testers corrected the Sesotho phrases.

Some of the administrators were not asked all of the questions, especially those that related to teaching and learning in the classroom because the point was for them to answer the policy questions in question three. However, those who had time were asked some of the other questions.

It is also important to point out that, because many of the participants did not understand some of the approaches, the majority of the questions that I asked related to the participants' opinion about the concepts. That is, I asked how people would feel, or would they support the approaches, if they were implemented? And I wanted to know how they would support the approaches. It was difficult at times, because, as I pointed out, I would explain the concepts first and then ask people afterwards.

Observations

Observation is a method that helps to discover complex interaction among situations (Rossman and Rallis, 1998). Through observation one can see and judge body language, the physical environment, and other related artifacts that might contribute to the study. Observation in this case would take place in a period of three to four weeks, from August through mid-September because classes meet twice a month. Each

observation would take three hours, and it would be videotaped. The video camera would be put in a place where it would not disturb the class. It would be important to videotape the observation sessions because I would not be able to capture all the class activities at one time. Some parts of the tape would be played back to the class so that they could see what they were doing and reflect some more. According to the plan, the lecturers would also view the tapes with me after the class observation so that there could be some more discussion of what happened in the classroom.

I proposed some themes that would guide the observations. Such themes were intended to help guide my observation of what related to experiential learning approaches. This process would be a difficult one because experiential learning approaches are field-based; they are activities that are done practically in the field. I included the following themes:

- How is the status of students with regard to freedom of speech and movement in the classroom? .
- How do students give feedback to their lecturers and other learners?
- Are students asked to contribute to the course outlines?
- What are the power relations? Who participates more, men or women?
- Are lecturers using some of the experiential approaches mentioned earlier? For instance, are students involved in problem solving techniques, group discussions, role-plays, collaborative work? And more?

My observation schedule would follow the schedule for the Certificate in Adult Education Program. For instance, the total number of courses for both programs is six;

(the detailed structure is discussed in Chapter 1) each class meets for three hours of instruction for two weeks out of each month for each course. Each course has an individual teacher, so the total number of teachers in the Certificate program is six. If I work the time out it would be: Certificate One = (1 course x 3 hours per class meeting) x 2 days = 6 hours. Therefore, three courses are 18 hours per week x 2 weeks in a month = 36 hours. The same number of hours would be obtained from calculating Certificate Two hours.

Observation is classified into participant observer and non-participant observer. I would be a participant observer so that I could get a chance to be near the students as much as possible, even though they might look at me as though I am an outsider. I wanted to learn more of the habits that might lead to experiential learning approaches.

This plan was followed to the letter. However, the majority of the lecturers did not observe the tapes after the class observations. The main reason was time; there was no time for them to come to view the tapes. My sense also told me that being taped is different from watching yourself on the screen. My experience in micro-teaching as I trained to be a teacher helped me to understand how some people might feel watching themselves on the screen in the presence of another person.

Again, as I arranged the observation meetings, I got questions like, "Did you see something very bad that I did?" I might be wrong, but I felt like some people thought the viewing of the tape was for criticism more than for continuing our discussions after the observation sessions.

Data Management

Data management is as important as data collection (Cresswell, 1994). A notebook would be used to take notes in all three methods. To avoid confusion, three notebooks would be labeled differently or would have different colors for students, teachers, and administrators. I would keep a record of who to meet, when, and where. I would also keep a journal of what was happening every day. This would help me to reflect on each day's event or work. Analytic memos or critical incidents would be used at each observation or interview so that if there were themes, or patterns emerging, they could be captured. If there would be things that would need to be clarified in the field, I would have a chance to do that before I left the field. At the end of each day's activity, notes would be typed into the word processor. Important themes would be highlighted as they showed up.

I would like to address the issues of journals, analytic memos, and word processors. The journals were written during the first few days that I was in the field. As time passed, more responsibilities were added to my time. For instance, I would scribble something like:

Today is 08. 18. 1999, I had gone to visit some of the students in their work place. I found two of them, one is an instructor in Agriculture and the other resolves simple conflicts in local courts, complex ones are referred to the Paramount Chief. I was able to hold an interview session with one student only because the other one seemed to have a lot of work to do. Or rather, her office (local court), had many people who wanted service. These were village people who didn't normally make an appointment because the arrangement was a walk-in service.

I was impressed by the responsibilities that both students held in their jobs. I asked them if they ever share what they do with their colleagues at IEMS, and they said there was no time or IEMS did not provide such a possibility. (I am going to ask them to share what they do with their colleagues in the focus group and use that as a point of departure for experiential learning approaches)

Analytic memos- I wrote the memos as I entered data into the word processor, sometimes I would make a note of how the interview went. For instance, on one occasion I said:

The interview was fine even though it was for a short time. At the beginning I felt a little shaky, a little uncomfortable, I wonder why? Or the look in the eyes of this person reminded me of things that made me to feel uncomfortable in the past?

Or at another point I wrote:

This was a good interview- what I have discovered is that active learning is more dominating than experiential learning. I think that it is a good sign that teachers can implement experiential learning approaches if they knew about them.

Entering data into the word processor meant tape transcribing and I noticed that if I typed what I had, it would take me a long time before I could finish. I wanted to have more data transcribed before I left the field so that I could ask for clarifications. I first wrote what I transcribed into the notebooks, and then I typed. Transcribing is a very slow process; another problem when I was in Lesotho was the electricity that I used got cut almost every evening when I planned to do the typing.

Another way that I managed data was by developing the use of colored tags and markers. I used green tags or green color for administrators, red tag or red color for lecturers, and orange tag or orange color for students and their employers. This action helped me to arrange the files in the order of colors or tags. If I had to use paper clips, I also used the same colors to avoid getting mixed. I developed this strategy after I spent more than an hour looking for field notes from students, and I couldn't locate them. I pinned a paper with the key to the color arrangement on the wall next to where I was typing.

Finally, I named the participants so that I could know who said what without mentioning people's real names. This act, according to Rossman and Rallis (1998), has to do with confidentiality and protection of the participants. I had the new names and the real ones posted up on the wall. The re-naming of the participants made me feel as if I had power over them, to somehow own them because I didn't discuss the idea of names with them. I used Sesotho names and the meanings are explained in the findings chapters.

Data Analysis

Analytic memos would be the basis for the data analysis. According to Rossman and Rallis (1998), analytic memos give one a chance to understand the data, and to get insights into what the experiences are. This happens because the researcher reads and re-reads the data and makes reflective memos on issues that seem to come up as patterns in the study. Other ideas are generated in the process, thus testing the hypotheses in order to reach conclusions.

Data analysis would discuss some of the following categories: how participants define experiential learning, which experiential learning approaches are already integrated into the curriculum, whether or not participants support the implementation of the experiential programs, and some implications or barriers to implementing the approaches.

I did data analysis at the study site; I started with the writing process towards the end of October. As I indicated earlier, I had notebooks (each person's notes were written in a separate notebook and students' notes were written in another notebook). I had

cassette tapes (one for each participant). I typed both the interview and the observation notes into the word processor. Most of the typing was finished at the study site.

Since some of the tapes were done in Sesotho, I had to do the translation in my head before I could put the thoughts down. I didn't think it would be a difficult process because Sesotho is my first language, except that I wouldn't be writing word for word. I would be summarizing what I believed was said.

In analyzing and interpreting data, I adopted a simultaneous approach where I interpreted and described what happened. I used themes, further discussing some issues that needed some clarity, contrasting and comparing what the participants said. I wrote some thoughts about the underlying meaning to the responses.

In writing Chapters 4 through 6, it became easier because the participants were classified into three categories. Each question was addressed based on what each category of participants said. That is, each question showed how administrators responded, what lecturers said, and what students and employers had to say.

As indicated earlier, the questions formed the themes, however other themes like facilitation and feedback came through as the data were analyzed. In analyzing the data, I also used newsprint. I wrote each question or theme down and wrote the answer next to it. I followed the pattern with all the questions as follows:

Question: How do you understand experience?

'M'amoruti: I understand experience as something that somebody has gone through, or done, or seen, or been part of.

I would then highlight those ideas that I thought needed some attention. The newsprint was becoming cumbersome, so I turned to the notes that I had already typed and highlighted them as follows:

Resp: Yes, there is some learning that is taking place because you will internalize some of the things that you actually go through, and they will become part of what you have gone through or experienced. You see, the word experience is coming up again (we laugh) So they will be in you (meaning what you experienced). It is something that you can recall in the future and remember and associate it with other things as you go through life.

This is a good explanation that comes from a person who said she doesn't know experiential learning theory. What is the implication? That maybe people use different terminology or the problem was theory? Key words in this case are internalization, recall and remember for the future.

Limitations of the Study

The limitations of the study were discussed in detail in Chapter 1; however, the issue of generalizing the findings needs to be addressed. That is, the focus of this study is on the Certificate Program; what is said or discussed is basically concerning the 1999/2000 Certificate in Adult Education Program. It, therefore, cannot be generalized to include other programs at IEMS or elsewhere because their issues differ.

Another point is the bias I brought to the study. For instance, in Chapter 1, I started with an assumption that the IEMS Certificate Program is not fully integrating community knowledge, ways of living, or ways of problem solving with what is taught in the classroom. That is, the program is partially meeting the IEMS mission of carrying

University Services to the nation. I also knew that students believed in authority, and anything that the teacher said was taken as correct.

From my six years experience at the Institute as a lecturer and administrator, I already knew how teachers teach in the program. There is a lot of lecturing followed by distribution of a massive amount of handouts. Sometimes group-work is misused in the sense that, after students would be given work to go and do some research on a topic as a group they come and present their findings in the large group. In some cases, the teacher's feedback left some students with some doubts as to whether what was said by their colleagues was right or not.

Researcher's Role

I like what Rubin and Rubin (1995) say about the researcher's role. The role that one is cast into influences what interviewees would say willingly and openly. To introduce myself, I would write a letter to the Institute, which according to the Institute's procedure, would be discussed and be reported in several meetings at the University. I was also aware that that letter could give me a label that might affect my data collection. However, Rubin and Rubin's (1995) statement that students' roles as interviewers turn to be liked by those who are interviewed comforted me. However, those who would see me as an administrator would be a problem.

Another point of interest was connecting with participants. I was aware that even though I am a Mosotho woman, I might not be easily accepted because I had been outside the country for some years. That is why I pointed out that I would try to use Sesotho language so that the participants would connect with me. Was that a bias? I also

knew that if I spoke English all the time, I might not be accepted openly. I also wanted to get all the details about my topic, and English might limit them.

Marshall and Rossman (1995) refer to a full participant observer, whom I said I would be. I was also aware of experiences encountered by Van Manaan (1983) as a full participant. That meant I would have to use my intuition and emic perspective about how the participants viewed themselves in what they would be doing and saying. I would also be reflecting on my steps time and again to make sure that my role was understood.

Rossman and Rallis (1998) say that the researcher must try to eliminate all bias; that is, it is good to be aware of what one is bringing to the study. As I mentioned earlier, I had been in administration, and I also taught in the Certificate Program before. My experience might be a bias to my study if I would not question what I would be doing and why I would be doing it.

Some of the issues that would be discussed, like trustworthiness, would be more clear when the study was done; however, I would be consulting with students, maybe with the teachers as well, to make sure that what they said would be captured. I would use different methods such as interviewing, observation and a literature review, thereby triangulating so that what I would get was up to standard and ethical.

Ethical Issues

According to Rossman and Rallis (1998), ethical codes are, "intended to serve as guidelines for practice to ensure that participants in research projects are protected" (p. 49). I was also aware that these codes were according to American laws, but every country has its own ethics. My country would be an exception if it did not have its own ethical laws. However, I was going to adopt what the Western researchers had written with the hope of switching to Lesotho's later.

When I worked at the Institute, I was an administrator (head of the Division for three years). Before I went into the field, my concern was that the headship role might be a barrier or an advantage. For instance, students might not feel free to discuss some issues for political reasons. Or they might hide their feelings about the teaching that was being done at the Institute. The teachers, too, might think that I was spying on them when I sat in their classrooms. I thought I had an advantage of once being head of the Division until one of the students in the Qualitative Research class that I attended asked if I really had one. I am aware that I was thinking of using the position that I had to gain entry, and that would not be ethical. Even the information I would get might be doubted because people would be thinking of me as one of the administrators.

Another point that had to do with cultural and political issues was that I come from a country where authority is fully respected, and many of the people in high positions are men. As a woman, I might have a problem concerning questions that were to be asked of authority figures. That is, I might feel intimidated as to how to phrase the questions, especially the sensitive ones. Marshall and Rossman (1995) say that when interviewing elites, the advantage is that they know important information relating to

financial matters. Also they can make decisions about what has to be done. The problem was that they might not have time since they had busy schedules, or they might want to suggest how they wanted the questions to be asked.

Going back to the learners, sometimes it might be even difficult for some students to discuss their learning based on how the teacher teaches. They might think that this would affect the teacher's employment. Again, they might feel uncomfortable discussing their opinions with someone in authority. Another factor was that experiential learning was about one's experience in learning so some students might not feel secure discussing their past.

In some cases, my status as a woman who had studied in the U.S. might be questioned. People might think that I was bringing foreign culture to them.

I also wanted to mention that entry into the classroom might be a problem. One of my data collection methods was going to be classroom observation. From my experience, people, especially teachers, did not want to be observed. They usually want to keep their teaching methods private (Brookfield, 1996).

Having just come from a country where people's human rights are loudly discussed, that is, the U.S., was a problem for me because my country is authoritarian. It is not that rights are not observed in the classroom, but it depends on what the authority (the lecturer in this case) says. Culturally, I found it difficult to ask about the participants' feelings, and whether they wanted to continue with the interview or not. I also wasn't sure how students felt about being photographed and video-taped. I wanted to ask them, but I never had a chance. Those few who were in the focus group said they liked it, and they were honored by the fact that they were going to be part of the study.

The question is, what would they do if they didn't want to participate in the video- taping? Would they let me or their lecturers know? Would they have that courage to say they didn't want to be in the pictures even if it was formally announced that I was performing such a study and that they were to help me? If I asked them and they said they were not comfortable in being video-taped, how would I react? What action would I take?

In most cases I failed to judge the participants' moods during the interview process because Basotho people are very polite and the tone that is used is respectful and formal as people are addressed by their titles or 'M'e (mother) for women or Ntate (father) for men. Most often people smile or easily laugh during conversations.

Summary and Overview of the Next Chapter

Chapter 3 discussed methods of collecting data. It looked at interviews, class observations and IEMS Official documents in the data collection process, the participants in the study, the questions used, data management and data analysis. Chapters 4, 5, and 6 discuss the findings.

CHAPTER 4

THE BASOTHO'S UNDERSTANDING OF: EXPERIENCE, DEMOCRACY, FREEDOM, AND EQUALITY

This study is an investigation of Experiential Learning Theory: A Case Study of the Certificate in Adult Education Program of the Institute of Extra Mural Studies (IEMS) of the National University of Lesotho (NUL). It is the first of the three data chapters. The next two chapters concentrate on the integration and implementation of the experiential learning approaches and the barriers and possibilities regarding the approaches- specifically, a Credit-for-Prior-Learning program. In this chapter, the focus is on the following concepts: experience, freedom, democracy, and equality in the context of Lesotho. The purpose in this chapter is to explore how Basotho people understand these concepts because they are central to Experiential Learning Theory and their meaning and application may differ from country to country or even from region to region in a country depending on racial-ethnic groups.

The knowledge that I gain from this part of the study will, among other things, help inform the decision about whether or not experiential learning theory can be implemented at IEMS's Certificate in Adult education program. For instance, in Mohasi (1999), Meaning of Experiential Learning in the Context of Lesotho, one concern was the applicability of experiential learning theories to Lesotho and Basotho culture. That is, what would it mean to a Mosotho learner to learn through an experiential learning approach that is western-based? Traditionally Basotho people learned from the environment, and experience played a big role in their learning. But, with the

introduction of formal schools, there has been less and less recognition of experience-based learning.

According to Dewey (1938), experiential learning theory is a hands-on method of learning where a learner learns from the environment she is in. It is learning that is systematic because it involves a problem, reflection, decision-making, and action. The model is built on democracy, freedom, equality, and individualism, among other things. But the above principles that are characteristic of Dewey's society might not mean the same thing as those that are experienced among Basotho people. Specifically, Basotho are more familiar with an authoritarian ways of governing. That is, starting in the family, the community, at work, and in the government, there is always an authority person whose word is final. People have little or no liberty compared to the freedom in Western countries. In most cases, in Lesotho, people have physical and emotional fear to take action. For instance, in the work place, people fear that if they exercise their freedom, they may lose their jobs or get killed depending on how political the issue that is discussed is. Similarly, students may fear to express their opinions if the act would affect their grades.

I said above that it is important to know how Basotho people would answer the question about freedom because it (freedom) affects teaching and learning in the classroom. If a teacher believes that she/he has all the power, students cannot be part in any kind of decision-making. Teaching and learning activities will be teacher centered; whereas with experiential learning approaches as practiced in Western countries, the learner is in the center of learning. She/he has freedom and a variety of choices of what and how she/he wants to learn.

I used interviews and class observation for collecting data. The interviews were based on the three levels of participants as follows: There were four administrators, six teachers of whom three were full time members of staff and three were part time lecturers, six students from the program, and six employers who have hired the six interviewed students. The details about the participants are discussed in Chapter 3.

The data discussions follow the descriptive interpretive approach. That is, as data is described, and some issues of concern are analyzed with the purpose of constructing more meaning or raising more issues of concern in order to learn from the study. As I mentioned in Chapter 1, a qualitative approach helps me to narrate the cases as well as reflect on the narration to check the validity of data.

The interviewing process was discussed in Chapter 3, but interviewing administrators was both exciting and yet limiting. It was exciting to talk to Basotho officials after two years of being in a less formal country, the US. It was interesting how I had to change into the formal way of addressing people by their titles. In some cases I felt intimidated interviewing some of my bosses, especially because I was interviewing them for the first time. It also became a complex situation to discuss such issues as experience because people felt there was more to the meaning of the concept that could not be explained in words. The interviews for administrators were also limited by the fact that they (administrators) do not always have enough time due to their numerous responsibilities. I was, however, invited to schedule another meeting if I needed to.

In conducting the interviews, both Sesotho and English were used. It is important to note that there was a lot of 'switching' from both languages for those people who were bilingual. I discuss the implications of translations in Chapter 3;

however, the single parenthesis means that the quote was half English and half Sesotho. The process of 'code switching' or translating was not a big problem for me because I speak both languages.

Interviewees

A detailed discussion regarding people who were interviewed is in Chapter 3; however, the names of the participants and their meanings are discussed here in order to remind the reader about who they were. It is good to note that out of the four administrators, two were females.¹

Administrators

The four administrators that were interviewed are called 'M'athabo, 'M'athato, Thuso, and Lenepa for purposes of anonymity and they are all grouped under IEMS even though there was one person from NUL. The grouping is done for the purposes of easy reference; again all the administrators belong to the National University of Lesotho.

¹The meaning of the Sesotho names above: The prefix 'M'a stands for mother of and 'Ra' for father of. Sometimes some women keep their maiden names that start without a prefix 'M'a. Thabo means joy, Thato closest would be good will, Thuso means help, and Lenepa means one who always scores.

Lecturers

The Certificate in Adult education program is a two-year program. In each year there are three courses that are offered, which makes six courses in all. Therefore, there were six lecturers to be interviewed. Three of the lecturers in this program were full time and three were part time. Part time here means that these lecturers worked on a full time basis elsewhere and came to work on weekends at the Institute. The arrangement was as follows: Each class had one full time staff member and two part time lecturers. In Certificate One there were two males and one female and in Certificate Two it was vice versa. I am not sure if that pattern was planned, but it balanced the teaching well. In this study these lecturers are 'M'atlholo, Tlholo, Thapelo, 'M'athuto, Thuto, 'M'amoritu, and for easy reference and anonymity.²

Students

There were six students who were interviewed. These students also formed a focus group; the criteria for selection are discussed in Chapter 3. Out of the six students, three came from Certificate Year One and another three came from Certificate Year Two. There were three females and three males; their names in this study are Thabo, 'M'alerato, Thabiso, Tlotliso, 'M'apula, and 'M'athabang. The students' employers will not be named because they completed a questionnaire.³

²For lecturers, Tlholo means Victory, Thapelo means Prayer, Thuto means Education, and Moruti means Preacher

³For students, 'M'alerato means mother of Love, Thabiso means Happiness, Tlotliso is Flatter, 'M'apula is mother of Rain, 'M'athabang is mother of Joy, and Thabo is Joy. Both Thabang and Thabo mean the same thing.

How Administrators Understand Experience, Democracy, Freedom, and Equality

Each concept is treated separately, but some concepts like democracy, freedom, and equality seemed to overlap as people discussed how they understood them. Again, because the administrators had limited time, I started with questions regarding the policy in implementing the Credit-for-Prior-Learning program. I asked the questions that dealt with the experiential concepts if they had some more time left. The implication is that some administrators managed to answer all the questions in this section and some did not.

In this section, questions that were asked were based on the grand tour questions discussed in Chapter 3 and were as follows:

How do you understand Experiential Learning Theory?

How do you define experience?

How do you understand freedom and democracy in the Certificate in Adult Education class?

How do you understand equality in the Certificate in Adult education class?

Experience

The participants were asked the following question about *experience*: how do you understand experience in the context of Lesotho or Africa? The question was modified to include other people from African countries because there were some people who came from other parts of Africa. However, I assumed that African

understandings about these particular concepts might not be far apart in meaning even though the context might differ. The discussions that follow will indicate that my assumptions were correct. The following themes seemed to emerge as common to the participants' responses.

As a Process. Experience is understood as a process through which one learns using all the five senses such as sense of touch, hearing, sight, smell, taste and the whole body. The Majority of the respondents felt that one comes across experience in life or that it is something that you have gone through.

As Knowledge (*litsebo*). The Sesotho word *litsebo*, is often defined as knowledge. However, it means more than just knowledge because even experience is explained as *litsebo*. That is, there is one word that is used for knowledge or experience; however, the meaning differs depending on the context in which the word is used. Again, *litsebo* was used as the nearest equivalent of "experience" even though it was observed that it might mean more than just knowledge or it can have several meanings. It became clear early in the discussions that experience is just not about thinking, or acting, or decision -making. It involves ways of doing things, in the daily lives of people such as moral issues, politics, rituals, religion and more. Therefore, experience according to some administrators, is knowledge that one has acquired and has utilized. This is knowledge that can be drawn upon for future reference. For instance, if one comes across a similar problem in the future, one can recall how it was solved in the past and the same strategies might be tried again with some modifications.

As Action-Based.. Experience has some notion of action. Lenepa said, "It is prior planning into an activity, the participation into an activity and the after effect to

participation." There are three stages in Lenepa's statement: experience before participation, during participation, and after participation. A learner experiences how to plan for an activity and then continues to experience the act of planning and participation. Another theme that seems to emerge from Lenepa's interview is experience as a process of learning in stages. Lenepa did not mention thinking or reflection in the stages as part of the process of learning, but there is an implication that as one plans, acts or participates, and experiences the after effects of participation, thinking, assessing, and deciding what to do next must have taken place.

'M'athabo added that,

Experience is something that we have passed through, but it is not always consciously planned. It is something that one comes across consciously or unconsciously. But for it to be experience one has to internalize it. It remains in one's mind because of the action that will have been taken.

Some strong action verbs are used in this quotation such as *pass* through consciously or unconsciously, *internalize*, *remains* in ones mind. 'M'athabo explicitly indicates that experience has to do with mental abilities, that in order for one to learn from it, even to internalize it, she/he has to purposely think about what is happening, go through it (action), and then internalize it at an abstract level. According to Dewey, abstract thinking involves imagination, and imagination is a powerful skill in planning activities and in learning because it involves creativity as well.

Another element of interest that 'M'athabo discusses is 'internalization' of new knowledge. The idea relates to Piaget's thinking that new knowledge has to be acted upon and be internalized by the learner so that she/he ultimately owns it through the 'assimilation and accommodation' process. The assimilation and accommodation

concepts are discussed in the literature review chapter. 'M'athabo added that experience can also be an unconscious process of learning that will come to the conscious mind later in life, perhaps if such memory is triggered by some similar situation.

As Restricting. Experience can be restricting; that is, it perhaps restricts one from following other suggestions or ideas. One may be restricted if action that was experienced was a bad experience and a person becomes reluctant to try again. Dewey called that "non-educative" experience. There is a Sesotho proverb that says, "*ngoan'a il'a cha o ts'aba mollo*" "a burnt child is threatened by fire." To add to the idea of restriction, 'M'athabo mentions bad and good experience and she further says that bad experience is rejected whereas a good one is repeated. It remains in one's mind through a repetition process. That is how learning is taking place-through repeating desired experiences.

I find it interesting that the participants classify experience into good and bad because even theorists like Dewey and others pointed out that not all experience is a learning experience. Or rather not all experience is positive or "educative" experience that can be used effectively in the learning process because learning takes place even from a bad experience. That is why there is a saying that people learn from their mistakes.

As a Habit. Experience turns into a habit if it remains in one's mind, or it is internalized as mentioned in the previous paragraph. To clarify how it turns into a habit, 'M'athabo gave an example of a little girl who is growing up under the leadership of her mother. That is, that little girl grows up being told "*etsa hona, le hona, le hoane*" to 'do this, and this, and that' and by the end of the day her experiences have turned into a

habit. When she finally has her own family, the experiences that she gained from her family may form the basis of how she will run hers. 'M'athato further pointed out that that little girl's ideas about a family, bad or good, would have been influenced by her experiences and how she internalized them. Such experiences will be based on the emotions of the girl and her judgment of the situation based on the norms and rituals of her community.

None of the participants directly mentioned decision- making or self-reflection or critical reflection as playing a role in experience. However, such concepts seem to play a big role in what they (participants) are saying. For instance, when Thuso talked about bad and good experience, and when 'M'athabo mentioned internalizing experience, one can safely say that decision- making or critical reflection took place. In order for a person to repeat a desired experience, some internal selection must be made. The fact that reflective thinking was not directly mentioned does not mean that it was not a known concept because 'M'athato mentioned it when she said, "we out-grow the stages of having to agree to everything. There is a time when we are expected to make decisions". The time that was referred to here is when boys start to be accepted in local courts or when young women are asked to give their opinions about some issues in the family or community. The time for change in expectations was marked by the time that a person got married. In the past, in Lesotho, a boy or a girl got married after she/he had proved that she/he had reached maturity stage. There were tests that were done that cannot be discussed at this point.

As Behavior Change. Finally experience is seen as capable of changing one's behavior. That is, an individual may decide to change his/her way of doing things. This

point was not developed further, but change in behavior is an issue in how adults learn. That is, adult education is about change, change in attitudes, change in perspective, change in skills and so on. I want to conclude with 'M'athabo's quote that I thought was positive and enlightening to me. It is positive to me because it came from someone who is making decisions, a policy maker, so there is hope that the intention of recommending some ideas for implementation might be successful. She said,

. . . but I wish we could have workshops every time to talk about these issues, e.g., a concept of experiential learning. Even though as people we can talk about experience, the importance of experience, but we really have to know and understand exactly what is its implications, we need to engage more in learning experiences about this, and as a department I think our policy should be such that we demand on each teacher to teach in such a way that they adopt particular practices in teaching.

Democracy

In a (1999) paper entitled "Reflective Paper on Experiential Learning Theory," I expressed a concern about how Basotho people would define freedom and democracy because what people believed would affect the teaching and learning in the classroom. People would be influenced by their expectations regarding how a teacher should behave in the classroom and how learners should react to the teacher.

The question that was asked focused on the classroom in order to avoid political statements because the terms are also very political. However, during the interviews I still got responses like "I am not good in politics." I also put the concepts of freedom and democracy together because during the pre-test of the study I noticed that people were not separating them, or there was some overlap in their statements.

Most of the participants agreed that Basotho do practice democracy even though their concept of democracy may not be the same as that of the Western countries. For instance, 'M'athato said, " The type of democracy is the one that makes sense to us". And she went further to say, "Our democracy is different from the West, it has an element of dictatorship whereas Western one has a lot of diplomacy". The point of diplomacy was raised several times during the interviews. In the West if diplomacy fails, people turn to a vote in order to reach consensus. However, 'M'athabo thought that the way Basotho people understand democracy is foreign in the sense that they think they can do anything or get anything they want. 'What seems to be missing in the understanding of Basotho people is that everybody has to be responsible for his/her actions;' she offered the example of the Certificate class in which both students and their teacher had a code of conduct. They made the decision on the code of conduct democratically, but the implication of that code is that it had to be observed and respected by everybody otherwise it would not work. Basotho's democracy is authoritative and it is constitutional. That is, it is recognized at the state level, in society and even at family level. It follows, therefore, that even at school level such authority is experienced.

Lenepa thought it would be difficult to define such terms as democracy because perceptions and understandings differ. What is democracy to someone may appear as oppression to another person. The understanding is that even if Basotho people may talk about democracy, it is a limited type of democracy; a strong leader is an authority that leads, makes decisions individually sometimes collectively, and orders people around. For that reason, the expectation is that a teacher in the classroom has a high level of an

authority. 'M'athabo indicated that even when she goes out to an informal gathering like bereavement ceremonies, as a leader she is expected to speak on behalf of the students. The expectation, she indicated, comes from the students as well as from the people they are visiting.

My comment on the idea of an authority is that the authority figure is needed for accountability in any situation, but the authority should not be someone who takes all the power in his/her hands. It should be power with not power over, and as I observed some of the classes at the Institute, I noticed that some teachers were trying to involve students in decision making by asking them to nominate class monitors who would represent their various groups. The nominees were to represent men and women in order to balance gender issues (Belenky et al., 1986). Without going into the history of Gender in Lesotho's education, I will say that it was important that men and women be given an equal chance to respond in this study because the majority of learners are women. It would not work to have men who are in the minority make decisions for women who are in the majority. In addition, much literature has demonstrated that women are more experiential and relational than men, and as a result they are more open to new ideas than their counterparts. So to have them in the interview is both for support and for challenge.

Freedom

Not much was said at this level because as participants discussed democracy, freedom was also being brought into the picture. What seemed to be a common feeling was that freedom is restrictive because it is associated with responsibility. That is, one

has to be responsible for one's actions. This is an implication in "freedom" that one has to account for oneself to someone else, explain why you did what you did. Actually Lenepa said, " If I am a facilitator in class, I would not be likely to have the freedom to conduct or control or direct my learners and myself in the way that is agreeable to me."

According to Lenepa, when he is a facilitator he must agree with what is to be taught so that he can share it with the learners. I may be wrong, but I think agreement as used here means agreeing with the choice of content. So the dilemma in this case is that what is agreeable to the facilitator may not necessarily be agreeable to the learners. In order for the facilitator to accommodate the learners' freedom, he/she will need to adjust his/her own freedom in order to accommodate what his/her learners want. The issue of freedom in the classroom is a critical one because according to Freire (1993) education is not a pure or innocent process, it is either for 'domesticating or emancipating'. Again, teachers of adult students may also not be free from their own agendas as they enter the classroom. Or they may not be free from the cultures that are embedded in the classroom. That is, the expectations of the course and those of the learners may not give the teacher enough freedom. As Lenepa indicates above, a teacher will teach what she is comfortable with, and if she believes that she is an authority then there might be very little or no freedom exercised by the students. Again, Freire (discussed in Mayo, 1999) believes that authority, and not "authoritarianism" teaching is needed in the classroom "because educators can have a theoretical understanding which is superior to that of the learners.." (p. 67). Authoritarianism leads to a "banking education" that Freire (1993) referred to and I discussed it in Chapter 2.

One other observation is that these participants did not actually explain what they mean by freedom maybe, because it is one of those words that are so familiar that it is not easy to explain. Nevertheless, from their interviews, I infer that freedom is the ability to express one's feelings or ability to share. As one of the participants, Lenepa, said, "We need democracy and freedom for sharing purposes; some students have more experience than others, even than other lecturers – so freedom will allow sharing of ideas."

Equality

The participants who answered the question on equality did not directly say what it means to them, but they seemed to agree that equality would be difficult in a situation where, as a teacher, you are expected to give a final summary of what you taught at the end of the day. However 'M'athato argued that giving a summary is not the same as a teacher is saying that his/her word is final. She said it is only to be aware that as an authority figure, you have been given a responsibility to close the discussions, give directions for the next day, or highlight what was learned.

The tutor-learner relationship was another aspect that seemed to be a common concern to some administrators. The concern was that it would not be easy for a teacher to be equal to the learners because a teacher or a facilitator is already expected to play a different role from that of a learner whose role is to learn. To put it in 'M'athato's words,

They (learners) are something, you (the teacher) are something else, so how do you expect to be equal with them when the perspectives are already different?" Sometimes the classifications or groupings seem not

to work positively because if students are already categorized, it becomes difficult for them to get out of the boxes that they are put in.

Gender was raised as another concern. People felt that it is difficult to talk about equality in IEMS classrooms where out of forty students, only ten might be men and the rest are women. " Women are the ones who ask and answer questions and who challenge each other," said Lenepa. So that men are out-numbered by women. The implication is that it would not be easy to apply gender equality in the classroom. I did not get the impression that women intimidated men in the classroom, but since they are in the majority, they do outnumber them. I also did not get the impression that one group was powerful than the other, but that does not mean that there were no tensions that were caused by gender differences. How about other issues such as admissions, absence from school, and many others that relate to policy and equality? I think that because my focus was in the classroom, I did not move towards administrative issues and equality. Again, as I said, for administrators, the focus was on Credit for Prior Learning assessment.

How Lecturers Understand Experience, Democracy, Freedom, and Equality

In interviewing the lecturers, I used the same questions that were used for the administrators. At this point the emphasis was on how the lecturers understood experience in relation to the teaching and learning of adult students, that is, whether or not the concepts were applied in the classroom. The reason is that teachers play a big role in the implementation of new ideas in the classroom. Lenepa indicated that one cannot share what one is not comfortable with.

Experience

Each concept above was discussed individually, but as with the administrators, some concepts were given more attention than others. I experienced some reluctance on the part of the lecturers in some cases in relation to defining concepts like experience because some lecturers felt that the idea was a new thing or it was something they had heard of but have not really paid much attention to. There was a feeling of right or wrong as people answered the questions in general, that is, some lecturers felt like there was a right answer out there and it would be embarrassing if they missed it. I also sensed more of a doubt in answering the questions about experience. I may be wrong, but I think the hesitation was because talking about experience was like asking people to reflect on how they learn from everyday activities, which is something that is always not easy to do. They may not ask students to share their work or life experiences in class on a regular basis because the program does not have time for that.

There was no noticeable difference in how lecturers explained experience compared to what administrators said. For instance, there was a common belief that most learning takes place through experience; that the five senses of the whole human being play a big role in learning from experience because people use them to feel something or make judgments about what they see. Again, experience is believed to have an action component because people felt that for one to experience something one has to 'pass through some events' and in the process one learns from them. For instance, Thapelo defined experience as follows:

In Africa context, we believe that experience is the best teacher, so if one goes by this, it means it is a kind of accidental learning that one does not have to undertake deliberately but which constitutes the greatest bulk of

one's knowledge that could be applied not only in theory, in learning or anything, but in one's life undertaking. So experience is learning the way I see it. It is wider in scope; it can be applied to any situation in life.

Thapelo is using some interesting metaphors: 'Experience is best teacher and a king' in defining experience. According to Thapelo, the best teacher is the one who knows what to do in teaching so that experience helps students to learn best. He, like Knowles (1984), believes that if experience is used as a priority in the learning of adults, their learning will be the best learning because they will be learning from what they already know. Thapelo's metaphor of a teacher might be based on the African teacher or the Western since Thapelo is a senior African and he obtained his education from the West.⁴

The second metaphor in African context is that of a king who is a leader, a ruler of the people below him. A king in my traditional culture was 'molomo oa sechaba' the voice of the nation under him. To call experience a king means that it is learning that is gained through sharing, interaction, dialogue, decision -making and action collectively and collaboratively. It implies that such knowledge is the best for an adult learner because it also involves respect, how other people feel about action to be done. I think experience that is build on the second metaphor would depend on a number of issues like who decides on the "best knowledge"? What has the learner learned from such experience? Another thing is that in African history not all kings were the best kings, so not all knowledge that is gained from experience is always the best as noted earlier. Thuso already indicated that there is bad and good experience.

⁴In Lesotho, a senior person is expected to be wiser because she has seen many moons or "khale a e-ja mabele".

Another idea is that experience is accidental learning which one gains through life undertakings. The question is what would be the implication for both the learner and the facilitator? Is the idea not contradicting the metaphors above? What Thapelo may have meant is that experience is life undertakings, which are sometimes not planned. So learning from them may not be as apparent as when one is in a formal learning setting. One needs a facilitator who will help the learners identify what they have learned from such experiences. I have observed in the University Without Walls, a University of Massachusetts program, and I experienced cases where lecturers guided students in identifying what they had learned from their past experiences. It was not an easy thing to do, but it was do-able and it is rewarding for both the student and the teacher.

"Experience is learning and it is wider in scope". Said Thapelo. The statement is also important in the learning of adults who come from different working situations. It means that their different experiences should be accommodated within the experiential learning scope. A question that one would ask is whether experience can be applied to all life situations. It might depend on the kind of knowledge one would have gained in each situation, such as technical, practical, or emancipatory as discussed by Habermas (1972 in Welton, 1993, p. 85). That is, how much practical interest one has in an event might determine the knowledge that a person will gain from that particular experience.

'M'atlholo's description of experience seemed not to differ from the others that have already been cited. I was going to leave out her quotation when I realized that she is suggesting another way of knowing through dramatization:

Learning by experience means when a person learns based on the occurrences -if it is possible for them to act, they can even act some

things. The five senses are used in learning for instance, the sense of smell, taste, sight, hearing, and the whole body.

She says that the occurrences can be acted out, and from my experience, acting or role- playing activity is a very strong way of learning because players pretend to be the people dramatized. In the process, they try to feel how the real people felt, how they solved problems they faced and so on. According to Dewey, drama is one way of making learning experiential in the classroom because it is action-based; it is hands-on learning. However, it depends on whether adult learners would be interested in performing in front of other learners. 'M'athlo pointed out that her students liked drama and there had been some occasions when they dramatized some situations. Tlholo also added that for demonstration sessions, his students dramatized Health or Agricultural issues. Both 'M'athlo and Tlholo confirmed that students who participated in such dramatic activities seemed to have gained more knowledge of the concepts than those who did not.

The examples given above do not conclude that everybody will learn from drama because learning in such a case may depend on a number of factors. For instance, it may depend on the interest, attitudes, perceptions, interpretations, and reflection a person will have towards the action that is being dramatized. Most importantly, drama depends on whether or not people have the time to be involved in it because it is time consuming. It is actually one of the examples of experiential learning that requires collective action, whereas experience is often very individualistic and centered around the one who is experiencing it.

'M'athuto, like 'M'atllholo, was hesitant at first about what experiential learning theory meant, but when she was asked about experience she said:

If I am allowed to use my layman's point of view, I take experience to be whatever someone has learned before, or someone has experienced before or seen or anything that one has interacted with before. Some of these people (students) have been to school before, and have learned some of these things, they have been or are at work and they come across these things in everyday life. So I take experience to be all of that reserve from either the learning, the workplace, home situation, wherever one is, wherever one interacts with people, gets to read about things or gets to read these theories.

I found 'M'athuto's explanation intriguing because she is adding another dimension to experience, which is the environment. She says that experiential learning takes place wherever a person is. She includes places like school, home, workplace as part of the learning environment. I am impressed by what she did in including the home as a learning place because that act acknowledges the importance of the home. Sometimes some parts of the world, especially Africa, do not appreciate what is learned at home as important skills that can be shared in an academic environment because such skills are not recognized in the economic world. Many people who are working at home are women who have been excluded from developmental issues for centuries (Tong 1998).

Furthermore, 'M'athuto says that people learn from interacting with each other or even reading books. From her statement one can say that 'M'athuto's answer is that experience is learning through interacting with one's environment.

Thuto's quote showed a sharp contrast to other quotes because he actually answered what experiential learning is, not how he understood experience. I think the

way he answered the question was also influenced by how it (question) was asked. He said:

What I know of experiential learning is that it is learning that is based on the learner's experiences, that is in life situations and also in their day-to-day activities. Mainly, it is inclined towards when they learn, then they draw back from their experiences and they move on from there. What I mean by that, people have different experiences in life. They experience things differently, but in adult education you could consider those different experiences as a stepping-stone towards building on the knowledge of what the person knows.

What is different about this response is the use of different expressions. For instance he is defining 'experiential learning' and not 'just experience'. What is interesting is to notice the similarities of ideas like 'is based on learner's experiences, that is in life situations and also in day-to-day activities.' I may be wrong, but Thuto's explanation seems to be influenced by what he has been reading as an adult educator. If my hunches are correct, it is amazing how the ideas that go with experience are similar universally. He further points out that learners' experiences are situational and are based on day-to-day life activities. There are similarities between what Thuto says and what Thapelo said above, that experience is based on life situations. It may sound like a repetition in this case, but the point that is being clarified is that situations (environments) where people learn differ, so even what is learned and how will also differ. He says, "learners experience things differently and such differences could be used as a basis in building on the person's knowledge." The latter statement is similar to the multiple ways of knowing that are discussed in the feminist pedagogy and critical reflective thinking literature in Chapter 2, that adult learning should accommodate differences in the classroom.

Again it has already been mentioned that experience, in classroom context, is learning from experiences. Thuto is extending this idea by saying that students "draw back from their experiences and they move on from there" The implication may be that students base their future thinking on what happened in the past and then decide on what action to take. Thuto also acknowledges differences in learning- that there are multiple ways of knowing. His idea is important at the Institute because a majority of students are women and, according to Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, and Tarule (1986), women may be more connected knowers than men. That is, women are social learners and they learn best if what they learn is socially based.

Tlholo's and 'M'amoruti's responses were straightforward from the beginning of the interview because they said they were not familiar with experiential learning theory, but they were able to tell what they understood by experience:

I don't know experiential methods; it is my first time to hear the term. I understand experience as something that somebody has gone through. Something that somebody has either done, something that somebody has either seen or has just been part of without being involved in it- just seen or just gone through it without participating, but you know it by seeing it, by going through or.

I haven't read about it that much, but I came across other theories like behaviorists because its whereby you draw from the learners' experiences. In other words you want to know what is it they want to learn then you build on it.

These two quotes are interesting because the first quote seems to indicate that one gains knowledge from experience, -that experience is the process of learning, whereas the second quote is based on how experiences as a learning approach can be used in the classroom: after finding out what the learner's experiences are, you build on the knowledge.

Democracy

The lecturers answered this question differently, yet the meaning was the same because the concern was generally that in Africa democracy as a concept is confusing because "sometimes democracy means legitimization of corruption." Sometimes people may be wrong, but their ideas are accepted because the majority rules. Again, like Lenepa above, the lecturers felt that the meaning of these concepts depended on how one interpreted or viewed them. I realized that if I asked about the meaning of democracy without being specific, I received answers such as "democracy in what way?" Or "I am not in politics". So my question was, "How do you understand democracy, freedom, and equality in the classroom?" The reason for grouping the concepts together has already been explained.

Two main ideas emerged in defining democracy in the classroom. One of the ideas, according to Thapelo, 'Mathuto, and 'M'amoruti is that, "democracy can be seen as a kind of freedom of choice, that we are equal before the Lord then you must give me respect of what I think is right the way I see it". The three above felt that it is a right to be in class and be an active participator. It means students are free to criticize whatever situation in the classroom so that they can have that freedom to discuss what others have presented. Since they are a majority, they should have input on running the class. For instance, they should say when to meet, and or when to bring assignments.

The second idea is the notion of sharing ideas because Thuto and 'M'athuto said, democracy is "sharing teaching with the learners by involving them, listening to their views, and using their experiences." Or "having some participation as students are asked to comment, to give experiences of whatever is discussed on a particular day." However

'M'amoruti and Thuto felt that democracy should be controlled to a certain extent to avoid running a "risk of laissez- fair kind of situation." Democracy should be how students make decisions in the classroom to avoid a situation where clever students group together and not so clever ones are on their own.

From the quotes above, democracy is defined as a freedom to say something in class through participation or being involved as students to choose what topics they would like to study, or when to submit assignments. Another point is that by sharing of experiences, at the end of the day students and the teacher will have learned different things from one another. The word 'sharing' might not have a clear meaning in relation to what democracy is, but it seems to fit in the context of the classroom, that students have a freedom to share what they know. The question is, how free is freedom in the classroom?

What seemed interesting was the use of "freedom" in order to explain democracy, or even the use of "equality" to explain democracy. The meaning I got was that all the three words are connected. Thapelo indicated that democracy means that people are equal and they have to respect one another's opinions. The implication is that in class, teachers of adults, according to Thapelo, should respect the learners' opinions just as they (lecturers) would like their opinions to be respected by students. Respect in African culture is taken as the basis for behavior, even though practically it is a bottom up process. Respect should be a give and take thing between lecturers and students, female and male, and young and old.

I, however, feel that there is a concern that being democratic may cause problems of discipline in the classroom. As Thuto said, "you run a risk of laissez- fair

situation' or democracy should also be controlled'. This idea was not further developed, but since most of the lecturers indicated that democracy is a confusing word that they are still trying to understand, they may not feel free to apply it in their teaching. On the second thought, it might be that lecturers still feel that they need to be in control of what has to happen in the classroom. The latter idea could be a problem if what has to be taught is not what a particular lecturer likes. Or like 'M' amoruti said, teachers may not be sure how much freedom to give in the classroom. It would be a problem too if teachers give too much freedom to the learners. Each teacher's intuition and perhaps her beliefs, will, responsibility, care for her students, and confidence would be used as a guide.

Another concern that was voiced individually was that the way the Certificate program is structured does not allow for deviations or initiatives. Some lecturers gave the course outline that has to be completed in a given time as a reason for not trying other ways of learning that are experientially based. However some of them felt that they do exercise democracy through the course outline. " I ask them to suggest a topic they want to start with, they are free to choose, they are also free to tell me when to take a test or not to take it. I am flexible and I am taking their problems into account to also achieve democracy." What the lecturers are saying relates to what Rogers (1996) observed that in most learning situations, adult learners are involved in minor decision-making issues, not major ones.

To clarify the course outline issue that was referred to by many lecturers above, what happens from my experience of working in the Adult Education department at IEMS and from what the lecturers said is happening is that, they are given course

descriptions from which to develop course outlines that they will use to teach the course. These course outlines are to show all the details of topics that will be taught each meeting session, the number of assignments that students will write, and dates when such assignments are to be submitted, dates for mid-term tests and final examinations. The course outline, for me, is a way of giving lecturers freedom to explore the course description further and add what they think is appropriate to the course as experts in the subject they are teaching.

As a follow up on the course outline idea, I asked the following question, "Can you not develop the course outline so that it accommodates other approaches of learning, including experiential learning approaches?" Some said that they could. One of them, Tlholo, said one of the external examiners they had in the previous years recommended that they should design a course outline that is practical-based. Course outlines that included hands-on activities like field projects. Thuto observed that he edits course outlines together with the learners, but he felt that their level of education might not allow them to take part in designing the course outline. He, like Thapelo, allows students to select the topic that they want to start with. When the lecturers were asked if they let students comment on the outlines that they are given as a course syllabus, they said, 'No, they have not had chance to add something on the course outline,' "I haven't invited them to," or "we only go through the course outline together with the learner."

Some lecturers referred to the fact that students themselves may not be in a position to articulate clearly what they want if they were to be involved in curriculum planning. Curriculum planning here referred to course outline because the discussion

was still on how learning could be democratic. For instance, Thapelo said, "We can only sample their opinions. They may not come and develop the curriculum because we have to do this in line with socio-economic movement of the country, and we want to see where the students are aiming at, what they want to achieve with their education. As educators, we are supposed to know best, we know what learners want." Thapelo felt that getting input from the learners would be the closest thing they could do towards democracy.

From the two paragraphs above, one gets the impression that lecturers are skeptical about involving learners in planning and decision-making concerning what they are taught in the classroom. Their concern, which to some extent may be legitimate, is that students may not be in a position to put their ideas out in an academic discourse because of their level of education. They felt that people who are admitted at Certificate level vary in experience and academic knowledge that they gained from high school. Some of them may have finished their high school five years back, and they may not be sure of what they want to learn. Some may know what they want to learn, but they may lack clear goals and objectives in expressing their feelings. And all are expecting the teachers to do the teaching.

Without disputing how people felt, I believe that if students are helped to reflect on what they already know in relation to what skills they have and what they do at their respective workplaces, they may be in a position to at least say what they want to be included in their curriculum of study. That process of thinking about what they want to learn is good learning itself.

Thapelo feels that the curriculum should meet the needs of the country based on that country's socio-economic movement. The question is whose interests should the curriculum serve? In Chapter 1, I pointed out that one of my concerns in this study was that the Certificate program might be failing to recognize learner's needs, the Institute's needs as well as the country's needs. Thapelo's response is actually addressing my concern because new innovations in a country depend on what people need socially as well as whether they can economically afford to fulfill their needs.

Freedom

It was not easy to make a clear distinction between democracy and freedom because democracy was explained in terms of freedom of speech, that students should feel free to say anything in class and criticize their teachers as freely as they could. Two people who tried to respond to this question said freedom is giving learners a chance to express themselves, share their experiences from the field. "Freedom is rendering experiences of other people", Thapelo said. It means allowing the students to feel free to criticize what is happening in the classroom.

The latter idea seemed to be expressed several times by the lecturers, and I wondered what they really meant by saying that students could freely criticize them. I asked them how they did it, how they allowed for free criticism. The answer I got was that students are always encouraged to ask questions or they are told that the lecturers are only facilitating, that learners should feel free to take a lead in the discussions. However, when I went for observation sessions, there were some contradictions in some classes because the teaching seemed completely in the control of the teacher. At the

same time I may not conclude anything because the observation was at the beginning of the year, and teachers were still trying to establish relationships with their groups.

From classroom observation, many lecturers recognized the students' experiences and freedom by asking them to participate in the group selection and or nominate class representatives. Such action suggested to me that there was going to be a possibility of implementing experiential learning theory in future.

Facilitation is another topic that lecturers brought up time and again. The majority of them said they followed Knowles' andragogy because they knew Knowles' work, so they were facilitators and they said that as facilitators, they gave the students democratic roles, equality and freedom of choice. I asked 'M'athuto what she meant by facilitation as follows:

Question: 'M'e you kept saying you are a facilitator to these students yesterday, How do you define your role as a facilitator?

'M'athuto: Facilitator is one who, a person who, you know at the moment we are dealing with adults, some of who have spent a long time without reading, without looking at books. So one important aspect is to gradually give them a skill in reading though they may not have a reading culture. You gradually instill in them that reading helps to give one some information. And also the way of getting information from the books, from library sources, even the ways of making sure that what has been read is not focal.

Question: So, eh, well, I am already referring to yesterday's class about facilitation concept. Did you feel they understood you when you said you were a facilitator?

'M'athuto: I thought they would, well, I thought they understood because I didn't stop at that. I explained what a facilitator is, I said I am there to help them learn not to lecture to them.

Equality

Both Tlholo and 'M'athuto addressed the issue of equality based on gender in the classroom. Without paying attention to other kinds of equality, they felt that it is not possible to talk about equality in the Certificate Program because majority of the learners are women. However, Thuto defined equality as "the atmosphere of not being a boss, you are of the same opinion, the same ideas, not master of all." I want to believe that by "the same ideas, the same opinion," the lecturer did not literally mean that they should think alike with the students. Individual people have different opinions because of different perceptions. What I think is meant is that lecturers should try to listen and understand what the students are saying as they would listen to their equals. Thuto started by saying equality "is the atmosphere of not being a boss"; his idea is similar to what Thapelo said.

Thapelo added that equality is a difficult concept to talk about in Africa. Without explaining what he meant, he addressed equality based in the classroom and he said, "somebody will still have to gear up a lecture, can stimulate, sensitize discussions". He further said equality depended on the perceiver, on the way you see it. What he said was also brought up by Lenepa, that these concepts depended on how an individual person interpreted them. For instance, a lecturer who takes herself/himself as an authority will not consider learners to be equal. Thapelo further said that equality means lecturers

should view learners as partners in progress. Thapelo's statement seemed to be a wish that "lecturers should view.." and not "lecturers view.." He seemed to be aware that sometimes people do not do what they say.

How Certificate Students and some Employers Understand Experience, Democracy, Freedom, and Equality

I interviewed six students who represented Certificate One and Two. Out of the six students, three were males and three were females. One of the selection criteria, among others, was to interview students who were working so that I would be able to include their employers in the study. As a result, six employers who hired the chosen six students were asked to complete a questionnaire. Students and their employers came from the following work places: Ministry of Agriculture (2), Natural Resources (1), Home Affairs (1), Labor and employment (1), and Independent Electoral Committee (1). More detailed criteria concerning how students were selected are discussed in Chapter 3. The students wanted to use English in answering the questions, but they were also free to switch to Sesotho where they could not explain themselves.

Experience

Students answered the same questions that were answered by the administrators and the lecturers. I could sense that the students were people who were struggling to give the response based on their own way of interpretation that was not so much influenced by reading books. I had this feeling especially when I interviewed Certificate One group. Since they formed a focus group, in some cases their collective answers are

the most commonly used in the discussions below, especially if what they said in the individual interviews is not different from what they said when they were in the focus group. For instance Certificate One students answered the question on experience as follows:

It is knowledge that you know (*boitsebelo*) because it is something that you yourself know. It is something that came to you not because somebody helped you, but you helped yourself to know what you know. It came to you as an individual.

The Certificate One group uses the word "*boitsebelo*" to explain experience.

Boitsebelo is a reflexive word that is derived from the noun "tsebo" which I explained as knowledge in the previous paragraphs. It is reflexive because of the "t" between "bo" and "tsebelo". These students were aware that experience is based on an individual person; it is how each person gains or constructs knowledge from one's experiences. As a result, if experience becomes a teaching and learning approach, it puts the learner at the center of learning. What is intriguing is the fact that these students had not had a lot of influence from reading about experience because they had just started school. My assumptions are that their answers were more local based when compared to the answers of their colleagues in Certificate Two. That is, what they said was based on the knowledge they socially gained from the community. They must have used their ways of knowing to know what they know.

The Second Year students explained experience as follows:

It is knowledge that we have come across in life during school day. Sometimes it is something bad that happened to you, you experienced a problem so that when such an experience is repeated, it reminds you of what happened. It is not experience if it did not have an impact on me.

The way the second year students answered the question already makes one consider the possible influence of the one year that they had spent at IEMS. The idea of bad experience is brought up again, as if only bad things have an impact in peoples' lives. Good things are also remembered, but good memories seem not to be recognized more maybe because people's lives are based on problems and solutions to the problems. Bad things make people to stop and consider the cause.

Democracy

The students felt that democracy is a way people express their views publicly or that it is how equality has to be used by both women and men and children and parents. They continued to say that adults should respect children so that the latter will also respect adults. However, Thabiso, like the administrators and the lecturers, explain democracy as freedom because he said, 'democracy means freedom to everybody.' He switched to English language and said,

We need to be free. We need to be taught depending on how we want to learn. Our orientation should be student-centered. If I can tell how I want to be taught, and other students do the same, all our papers will show how we want to be taught and the teacher will select the common method.

The orientation that Thabiso is referring to is the one that new students attend a week before classes begin. Other students, (Thabo) felt that in Lesotho democracy is controlled, people are not free.

The employers explained democracy as a political word that has to do with power. That is, who has the power in governing the nation? For me, if such a word is used in the learning environment, the question is who has the power in decision making

in the classroom between the teacher and the learner? It will be recalled that the lecturers called themselves facilitators, and they explained facilitator as someone who is helping the learners to learn. From my observation, all the power of learning is in the hands of the learners, but the power of what is learned is, however, in the hands of the lecturers as they design the course outline.

Freedom

The students answered democracy separately from freedom based on how the question was framed. I was interested to know how free they were in the classroom more than how they understand freedom. The question I asked was, "How free are you in the class? The majority of students who answered the question, particularly those in Year Two, said they are allowed to ask questions or express their views in class. "We are told not to accept things, we should be critical." Thabo said. They were further asked if they critically analyze what they are taught and how they are taught, and their answer was no. They said that the tendency of the majority of students is to keep quiet and then to go and speak in the absence of the teacher or in small groups. According to 'M'alerato there are many reasons for such a behavior. Sometimes students may not be used to what the teacher is teaching. The latter statement was not explained further, but I understand it to mean that maybe the content was not familiar to the learners so it would be difficult for them to comment. It may also be that the teacher's approach to teaching might be such that it may take the learners time to understand what is happening.

She further pointed out that sometimes the school year ends before students get used to the teacher. "Getting used" also may mean understanding the teacher as an

individual, following his/her ways of presentations, being able to identify dislikes and likes in the classroom. From my observation, in some classes, class rules were not discussed so that it would be up to the students to decide what would be appropriate to do. For instance, break time was at the discretion of the teacher, yet I thought the discretion was putting some female students at a corner because they had to rush to the bathroom when the class was still going on because in some cases there was no break.

One aspect of interest is that all the students said they were free and they were always encouraged to talk, but why would they not express their feelings and wait until they were with their colleagues or in small groups? Is it because of what has already been discussed by administrators and lectures above, that the democracy and freedom that is exercised in Lesotho is authority based? If the students also belief in authority and feel that they do not have to question what the authority say, it would be hard to criticize their lecturers. Or are they influenced by their past experiences and attitudes they have towards a teacher as someone who knows everything? Another question is whether or not they have the skill of critiquing what is happening because during the observation sessions and interviews, I was not able to find out how criticism was done. However what is encouraging is that students are aware that their lecturers would like them to criticize what is going on in the classroom.

Some of the employers felt that freedom is connected with responsibility as some administrators said earlier. They also added that you give a person that you trust some responsibility. This reminded me of what was said to the lecturers during their orientation. One of the speakers said that the contracted lecturers were hired because the Faculty of Education and Senate trust that they can do their role of lecturing very well.

The employers' understanding about experience, democracy, freedom, and equality lack elaboration because they filled a structured questionnaire where they were expected to tick yes or no and follow their answer with some explanation. The majority of them did not elaborate on their choices.

Equality

The majority of the students who responded to the question on equality said they are all treated equally in the class. They didn't feel any discrimination among their lecturers nor other students. When asked who always chairs their small groups, they said chairing rotates to give everybody a chance to chair. Their answer confirms what some of the teachers said that they encourage sharing of class responsibilities. I asked 'M'apula if she believed sitting in a circle in the classroom. She said, "I think we are all equal so we should sit in a circle. We are equal all of us, even the teacher. Teachers are learning from us, we are learning from them."

What 'M'apula is saying might have implications where a lecturer uses a circle, but dominating discussions because she/he has a different meaning to it. The reader will recall that the lecturers indicated that equality is a difficult concept to discuss in African context because of the orientation that people have towards a teacher as an authority person.

For the employers, equality was discussed at the same time with democracy and freedom.

Summary

People seemed comfortable enough to share with me their genuine feelings about experience, democracy, freedom, and equality. In defining these concepts, administrators seemed to answer the question based on how people understand them. However, the lecturers seemed to be drawing their answers from what they read more than what they know as Basotho people. I may be wrong to make such an assumption, but what contributed to how they answered was the question itself because it was specifically focusing on the classroom.

The concept regarding experience seemed to cause no conflicts between the interviewed people. There is a consensus agreement that experience is the knowledge that is gained from everyday life activities through the senses of the body. Experience has some action, decision-making, sharing, negotiation etc. All the interviewed people supported the idea that adult students' learning should be experiential.

On the point of democracy and equality, the administrators and some lecturers felt that a lecturer must play a role of a leader, not a boss. The distinction of the two words "boss" and a "leader" is important because they don't mean the same thing. Both groups felt that lecturers should guide the discussions, summarize ideas, suggest work for the next class and facilitate teaching. I am still not sure what facilitation meant to most lecturers. However, Brookfield (1993), Collins in Welton (1995), and Freire as discussed in Mayo (1999) point out that facilitation implies that there are enough resources for the learner to be on her own, and that the learner learns independently from the teacher because she is self-directed learner. But, according to some lecturers' responses in Chapter 5, not all the learners at IEMS are self-directed learners.

Democracy, freedom and equality are political words for these interviewees and there is some confusion about how they understand them. For instance, the confusion regarding democracy seems to be caused by the feeling that it is a foreign term to most Basotho people in the sense that their democracy is not the same as that experienced in the West. Their democracy is modified, and it is democracy with some authority, whereas Western democracy seems to be more collaborative because it is based on consensus or majority rule. I want to point out that some administrators felt that Basotho people knew democracy as a concept even though the term became popular at the same time that Western politics were introduced.

The differences in the understanding of these concepts, especially democracy and equality may have implications for introducing experiential learning approaches because both students and lecturers will have different understanding of the terms. For instance, according to the Basotho culture, there is always a person who is at the head, who is making decisions on behalf of the rest of the group. Practically, other people can make some suggestions, but the fame or the blame goes to the leader of the group. The same meaning applies even in the learning situation. If students fail, the teacher does not know how to teach, if they pass, the teacher is very good in teaching and she/he might even get a promotion.

What the interviewed people are saying about democracy, freedom, and equality is that since they (the concepts) are confusing, more discussion about them would be an appropriate thing to do to avoid a problem of chaos in the classroom. Again, as some administrators said, equality in the classroom is ambiguous because teachers are on a different theoretical stand with the students (Freire in Mayo, 1999).

Critical reflection is done on a minimum scale. It happens during students' presentations when a teacher or students comment on how the presentation was done. Students' feelings are not directly explored because, as one of the teachers pointed out, they (feelings) are assessed through kinetic language. Teachers observe the students' reactions during the lecture or during any class activity. This reminded me that Sesotho culture is a high context one because most of what is done is not explicit; one depends on the actions more than what is said. People don't discuss things so everybody knows what is happening. Sometimes it is out of the fact that people were trained to listen more and do less talking. The implication is that sometimes people make wrong assumptions. To make an example, traditionally, questioning authority was not a desirable behavior among Basotho people. Some people still believe that it is still not a good thing to do. Because of that belief that it is wrong to question an authority who is sometimes an older person than you are, some people find it hard to question the authority even if they are encouraged to. Some students said it above that they are encouraged to be critical, but they don't do it. That is why I believe that experiential learning approaches, through critical reflective thinking (Brookfield, 1996; Freire, 1993; Mezirow, 1995), can help some Basotho Certificate students to think and examine their past beliefs, attitudes, fears, and interests with the purpose of keeping what is useful for their growth.

Conclusion and Overview of the Next Chapter

To conclude, this first chapter on data analysis was discussing the key concepts in Experiential Learning Theory. These were experience, democracy, freedom, and equality. The purpose was to find out how Basotho people understood them. Without

repeating what I said in the previous paragraphs, almost all the participants seem to individually agree that Basotho people also learn from experiences. Basotho people practice freedom, democracy, and equality, however, the democracy that is practiced is the one that makes sense to them, that is, democracy with authority. What the participants have said about the concepts has an implication in the classroom, so the next chapter will discuss the experiential learning approaches that are practiced on the Certificate in Adult Education Program. The question is, are they practiced? To what extend are they practiced? If they were not, what would be the opinions of those concerned if they would be implemented?

In this chapter, I discussed the experiential concepts and how the interviewees understand them; in the next chapter I will explore the use of experiential learning approaches in the Certificate in Adult Education Program. That is, I will find out which experiential learning approaches are used and if they are not, which can be integrated or introduced into the Certificate Program.

CHAPTER 5

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING APPROACHES AT IEMS' ADULT EDUCATION CERTIFICATE PROGRAM

In Chapter 4, I discussed some of the basic concepts that play an important role in experiential learning theory. These were experience, democracy, freedom, and equality. I discovered that the majority of people I interviewed feel that experience is essential in teaching and learning. Adult learners learn from their experiences individually and/ or collectively. They use these experiences for decision- making or to solve problems that might have occurred previously. These experiences may also be used to help plan future events. In general, the people I interviewed feel that a democratic and free atmosphere play a role in adult learning because learners have a chance to share their experiences among other learners as well as lecturers. However, the type of democracy and freedom that is experienced is that which makes sense to Basotho people, that is, democracy with some authority.

Experiential learning approaches investigated in this chapter include, cooperative learning; service learning; field-based approaches like role-plays, drama and simulation; and Credit for Prior Learning Assessment. The latter caught the attention of most of the participants because it is a program that is deeply rooted in experience. The first part of this chapter will discuss the questions used to collect data for this section, the language used during the interviews, and the opinions regarding the various learning approaches. (It is important to note that the resulting data is not linear in nature.)

Questions

The questions that were asked were typically knowledge-based questions. I was interested to learn if people knew about the experiential learning approaches and if the approaches were practiced in the Certificate Program. I wanted to clarify the opinions of people regarding the implementation of the approaches in the Certificate Program, if they were not already practiced. The latter part will be discussed in detail in Chapter 6. These questions were selected from section two of the grand tour questions as follows:

- What are the experiential learning approaches that are practiced in the Certificate in Adult Education Program?
- To what extent are the approaches integrated into the Certificate program?
- If approaches like service learning, cooperative learning, field -based approaches like role-plays and drama, credit for prior learning assessment, and critical reflective thinking approaches were to be implemented, which could be implemented without changing the University policies?
- How would you support the implementation of the approaches above, especially credit for prior learning assessment?
- How would such approaches be assessed?

The way each question was explored differed from participant to participant. Some of the participants focused more on the new approaches, perhaps because they were curious to know if the new approaches were really new to them. Some wanted to discuss the problems more than the meaning of the approach, or how the program would

be named or assessed. Again, since the study was following the qualitative research approach, I followed the interests of the interviewees. The grand tour questions were used as a fallback when discussions didn't seem to flow or when there was some hesitation on the part of the participants.

Another observation I made was that I was talking a lot as I tried to explain the new concepts to people. Even if I got their responses, I felt those responses might not be genuine because people were trying to understand the concepts and to express their opinions as well. I felt like I was putting pressure on them. I felt like they needed space to think about the concepts some more and absorb them first. I actually told some we would address specific concepts again the next time we met. More observations like this were discussed in the section on ethics in Chapter 3.

The questions I have listed were asked in order to establish the current practice concerning teaching and learning in the Certificate Program at IEMS and to avoid assuming that experiential learning approaches were known or were not known. Sometimes it happens that concepts are known but may not be integrated in the curriculum for reasons known only to the people concerned. Or sometimes concepts are common, but practice is different or vice versa.

Language Used During the Interviews

The interviews were conducted in both English and Sesotho in this particular case. When Sesotho was used, some of the key concepts were not translated into Sesotho because people already understood the concepts; they just wanted to converse in Sesotho. Since both Sesotho and English are official languages, it is a habit among

academics to switch between both languages. In this case, most of the terminology was in English except "cooperative learning" which in Sesotho is '*koporasi*' (singular) and '*likoporasi*' (plural). The word 'cooperative' has been coined to sound like a Sesotho word, but the original Sesotho word is '*letsema*' (singular) and '*matsema*' (plural). *Letsema* means working together in groups to achieve a common goal. For instance, the Basotho use a lot of *matsema* to build their houses, or to work in the fields, or to do any community activity or service. *Matsema* are also used for social gatherings where people make new friends and show love and caring for each other because they help each other to quickly finish projects and then enjoy food, singing, and talking afterwards. I am not sure when the word '*koporasi*' was introduced into the Sesotho language, but like other foreign words which have been coined into Sesotho, the influence might have been caused by coming in contact with the Western world through Western Credit Unions, or by being neighbors to the Afrikaners of South Africa.

Nevertheless, the idea of cooperative learning in Lesotho, particularly among the academics, is understood as group work or collaborative learning. The way cooperative learning is understood and practiced is different from how Bennet (1977) and Wilson (1978) explain it in Chapter 2. The question is whether cooperative is the correct word for "matsema" or collaborative should be the appropriate word to use?

Service learning was not changed into Sesotho terminology, but "service" means *ts'ebeletso* which means "work for". It can mean to work at home, or to work for someone where one is hired, or to work with other people at some cooperative activities. The idea of service learning among academics seems to be understood as 'attachments' because Basotho people originally learned through apprenticeship. That is, if a person

wanted to know how to design a clay pot, she would be attached to a specialist for clay pots and would work with that person until the skill of designing a clay pot was achieved.

For role-plays, drama, and simulations, to my knowledge, Sesotho language has one word that is '*ts'oant'iso*', or to act someone's role. To avoid confusion, I used English terminology because it is used more than Sesotho terminology. Again, a difference is not made between role-plays, drama, or simulations, so in this study, role-play will represent the other two approaches.

The final theme is Credit for Prior Learning Assessment Program. This was a new concept to most of the participants. As a result, I used the English terminology. I switched to Sesotho language when I elaborated on its meaning. As I indicated earlier, the knowledge of the two languages was an advantage for me because people were free to use the language that they felt more comfortable with. For instance, some employers felt that writing in Sesotho was more complicated than writing in English as some Sesotho words need extra explanation. It was a disadvantage for me because sometimes it is not easy to get a clear translation without somehow distorting the meaning.

Administrators' Views on the Experiential Learning Approaches

The discussions at this section are based on the administrators', lecturers', students', and their employers' views on cooperative learning, service learning, role-plays, and Credit for Prior Learning Program. Classroom observation and information from IEMS documents will also form part of the discussions. As in Chapter 4, each

approach forms the main theme for discussion. (Single quotation marks mean the quote is translated from Sesotho to English)

Cooperative Learning

Knowledge Level. The question that I asked at this level was the first one in the list of grand tour questions: "Which experiential learning approaches are practiced in the Certificate in Adult Education Program?" In order to answer this question, a person had to be a teacher or a curriculum designer. I did not ask the administrators if they knew about cooperative learning because they indicated that cooperative learning is cultural. It is how the Basotho people, especially those in the rural areas, live in order to carry out their daily chores. They assumed that the Certificate in Adult Education Program is using cooperative learning as one of the approaches of learning.

The responses I got from the curriculum designers or those who had taught in the program were that the approach is known and it should be commonly applied in the teaching and learning of the Certificate Program. For instance, 'M'athabo, when commenting about the use of the individualized approach, said that this approach would not be the best one for Basotho learners because 'our culture is rich in terms of cooperation.' People cooperate in different ways in performing their daily activities. Even in school, learners use a lot of group work.

The majority of administrators believed that cooperative learning was the approach that should be used in the Certificate Program because, according to 'M'athato, " IEMS learners are already in the field. Many of them don't need attachment, but what they are doing should be recognized." That is, the University

should give IEMS learners academic credit for what they learn in the field. However, the meaning of cooperative learning was not thoroughly discussed because it could be that 'M'athabo was referring to collaborative learning and not cooperative learning as it is explained by Bennet (1977) and Wilson (1978). 'M'athabo agreed that experiential learning approaches should be the method through which IEMS students are taught. 'Should we not be using them? I thought we were already.' She further said that experiential learning approaches would help to integrate local knowledge into the learning process. Questions that addressed integration or assessment issues were not discussed because as I already indicated, people assumed that the cooperative learning approach, which seems to be confused with collaborative learning, should already be part of the teaching and learning process. Again, some of the questions were not relevant to all of the concepts. Some were also not relevant to all of the participants. However, cooperative learning needs some further discussions for clarity purposes.

Service Learning

Knowledge Level. The majority of the administrators seemed to not be familiar with the service learning concept, or else they wanted to be sure that what they knew was what I was referring to, because I was asked to explain the service learning approach. I explained it as an approach that helps learners to put theory into practice. The expectation in service learning is that learners learn the theory in the classroom and then go to apply it at the workplace as they perform community service. The idea of community service is not articulated in the same manner that it is done in the U.S. because the Basotho people give service through collaborative work on a day-to-day

basis. Again, service learning as defined in Chapter 2 is learning where students volunteer their time with the purpose of familiarizing themselves with their communities. Communities become source of learning. In Lesotho's case, giving service to the community is cultural, it is how people help each other. However, service learning is not used as a learning approach in the learning Institution like IEMS.

Service learning is a hands-on and experiential learning approach (Battiston, 1997). It also gives learners and the lecturers a chance to learn more about organizations that are within their communities. They learn the problems that are encountered at workplaces and how to address them, because it is expected that such problems would be brought into the classroom for discussions. Students who are already working, have time to reflect on what is taking place in their workplace, and they have time to appreciate what they are doing as they explain to others. Such a process of learning builds strong working relations between the Institute and the local organizations, something that is not very strong at the present moment at IEMS.

Most of the administrators said it was a good idea, but they expressed concerns about implementing the approach because of the rigid curriculum and the University rules. Lenepa has this to say:

At certificate level maybe we can assume that they participate, they work with the community, and we don't have the opportunity to follow them to the community and see what they are doing.

Question: Why is that, why are we not following them to the community?

Lenepa: Because, as I am saying the curriculum is set in such a way that it does not allow us to supervise the learners. As adult educators we need to go out and supervise them and find out if they follow what they have to learn. So our curriculum here is fixed. We are in a box that we have not been able to get out.

So we go by the box rules. We can only assume that the learners are doing well in the field.

Lenepa uses a metaphor of a box with four corners when referring to the University's bureaucracy and rigidity. Once you are in the box, you are not able to get out of it. You are not able to see the outside of the box. It is as though the University people have blindfolded themselves so that they cannot see that the regulations are too rigid. Lenepa was not the only one who noticed how rigid the curriculum is. Some of the administrators felt that it would be hard to make some changes or introduce new innovations, unless the curriculum became more flexible.

The curriculum is fixed because of the regulations that most people referred to that include syllabus that has to be taught, the time during which the syllabus has to be taught and must be completed, the number of courses a student has to take in order to pass, and the number of assignments and tests that a student must complete in order to pass. In addition, the number of students who are admitted into the program is rather large. There were not less than 30 students in each group. (The curriculum is discussed some more in Chapter 6.)

The metaphor of the box reminded me of the saying that when one is inside a problem, it is not easy to analyze it objectively. There is a need to step out of it, and to separate oneself from it so that you look at it as an outsider. The question is, if the administrators who designed and presented the current curriculum to the University Senate advocated for change, why would the Senate not want to consider the new change? Why would the Senate not be aware that because the program is growing its

teaching and learning approaches need to change to accommodate the diversity of its learners?

Why did the administrators think this way? What is the real issue here? Is it a problem of change or a problem of finances? Many of the administrators pointed out that their concerns were only to raise awareness or to play the devil's advocate because they knew how the University Senators would react. Others were really saying that the current Certificate Program structure needed another review.

Assessment. Those administrators who answered the question about assessment raised a concern in relation to a lack of cooperation in the workplace. These administrators claim that some of the people in the workplace feel threatened by the IEMS trainers. As a result the trainers may not help students to achieve their goals. The people may refuse to help such learners because they think that after the training the learners will be more qualified and might become new bosses or even get promoted and earn better salaries. The notion that both the employers and students raised the issue of lack of collaboration by other workers felt intriguing to me. More will be discussed under the students' section.

Service learning, like cooperative learning, was not given much attention because participants feel that service learning can be implemented without the approval of an authority. However, the lecturers would not supervise the students when they would be doing their field projects. For instance, Lenepa said that lectures could raise concerns or matters for discussions. Lecturers could try to find out if learners try out what they learn in the classroom through evaluative techniques.

Role-Plays, Drama, and Simulations

Role-plays, drama, and simulations will be discussed under lecturers and students sections because they are about what is happening in the classroom. They are approaches that could happen without the University's structure being changed.

Credit for Prior Learning Assessment (CPLA)

Knowledge Level. Like the service learning approach, Credit for Prior Learning Assessment was not known to most of the participants. I attempted to explain it even though I was aware that it might not be very clear to people. I included examples of what I saw happening at the University Without Walls Program of the University of Massachusetts in my explanations. I simply explained credit for prior learning as a program where "credit is not awarded for experience per se, but for knowledge and skills for which university credit is appropriate" (UWW HandBook, p. 10). A credit is given to learning that had occurred through experiences because not every experience acquired is a learning experience. Students are guided to identify areas of interest from their past experiences. They are also guided to do further research on the topics that they have identified. The process involves a lot of writing and re-writing, listening, speaking, reading, reflecting, decision-making, supplying feedback and more. During the learning process students become knowledgeable in the topics that they are writing about. Students and teachers learn from each other and by the end of the day, each knows a lot about different subjects that would have been represented by all the students.

Support Level. Several interesting observations were made after I explained the CPLA. Many people felt that such a program and the approaches mentioned earlier

could improve the certificate in Adult Education Program in many ways. For instance, people said local knowledge (how people live on a day-to-day-basis) could be integrated into the learning process. It may happen that lecturers concentrate on the academic content and say very little about local knowledge. Integrating local knowledge would make the program very relevant to the learner, the community he/she is serving and the Institute. 'M'athabo made an observation that "an African person is a marginal person" because educated people in Africa lead double lives. When people are in school, they learn about different ways of living and when they go home they follow a different culture. She felt that if such experiential approaches could be implemented, a lot of what is happening in the villages would be integrated.

She further pointed out that local people have intriguing ways of analysis and problem solving techniques, and that unless students are encouraged to share their experiences, these experiences will not be known and other learners will not benefit from them. She made an example of radio discussion forums known as 'Seboping'. This is a radio program that allows anybody who has a radio and a telephone to comment on the issue that may be in discussion on the program. She said from listening to the discussions, one becomes aware how much Basotho local people, who have not gone far in education, know how to critically reflect on an issue and analyze it in a way that some educated people may not normally do.

Lenepa supported the idea that the Credit for Prior Learning Assessment Program could help the learner in the Certificate Program. Without explaining how the program can help the learner he further said, "So what we are doing here is all theory assuming that students will use the experience." Thuso added that he thought this

program, based on how I explained above, could help all the learners in the Adult Education Program, from the Certificate through Diploma to the Degree Program.

Lenepa also observed that when students are admitted into the program, they are required to have at least one year of experience in formal and non-formal programs, but once they are admitted, their experiences are not formally recognized. Introducing CPLA would open doors to discuss learners' experiences and even give them an exemption from courses for the whole semester. If a student has worked as program planner or community agent for some years, she could be helped to write about her experiences and research related literature to support her ideas rather than to take an introductory course for a whole year with students who might probably be learning about program planning for the first time.

The latter point caused me to check on the admission records, I found that one year of experience is actually the admission criterion that allows a learner who otherwise would not qualify for admission to be admitted. But such a student would still be required to have passed some academic work as discussed in Chapter 1. So, theoretically, if an applicant did not have that one year of experience, she/he would not be admitted. However, Lenepa confirmed the concern that I expressed in Chapter 1 that students' experiences are not integrated into the learning and teaching in the sense that they should be.

Assessment. Some of the administrators seemed hesitating to address the issue of how the Credit for Prior Learning Program would be assessed. They said they had not thought of how it should be assessed. Another concern that they expressed was that it was important to understand the program first and think of how it would be approved.

As I mentioned earlier, most of the discussions were based on the problems of implementing the program.

What I heard people say as they listed the problems, was they were going to support the program, but they were only raising a number of questions that would need to be addressed so that the program would be successful. Yet at some point, I could not help think that the catalogue of problems noted by the interviewees might have been another way of saying, "We already have many problems in this program; why bring more?" Some teachers and students who addressed the issue were more explicit as to whether they would support the program or not, as will be discussed later.

Lecturers' Views on the Experiential Learning Approaches

The questions listed at the beginning of the chapter were also used to interview the lecturers. Both classroom observations and IEMS documents form part of the background for the data discussions in this section. Feedback will also be addressed as an approach that is currently used at the Institute.

I observed that the lecturers, like the administrators, put more energy into discussing the problems that maybe encountered if some of the experiential approaches, especially Credit for Prior Learning Assessment, were to be implemented. Many of the concerns will be discussed in Chapter 6.

Cooperative Learning

Knowledge Level. Those lecturers who answered the first question on the knowledge level of experiential learning approaches seemed to have a general idea

regarding the approach. I also had a hunch that they were wondering how I could ask about an approach that they used everyday. During the interviews I listed the approaches before lecturers could answer a question to make sure that everybody knew what we were discussing. Tlholo said, " Cooperative learning is dealt with. Cooperative, the way I understand it, is how they learn". We both laughed. I think I laughed because he started to laugh, but also because I thought, as I pointed out earlier, that he was wondering how I could ask such a question. He followed his answer by saying, "So how is it related to experiential learning?"

This question that Tlholo asked suggested a conclusion that cooperative learning may be a word that is commonly used, but it might be losing its meaning to most of the Basotho people. Or, that, it is one of those common words that people know but cannot define them. His question also made me aware that our earlier discussions about experience might not have been understood very well. It could mean collaborative learning as I already indicated. I explained how it is a hands-on field-based approach where students work in groups to do a project and report as a group. That is, students have a specific time that they spent in the field doing as they do field work like in the case of in-service teaching. 'M'atlholo added that they (as lecturers) teach through the use of cooperative approaches every day. I therefore wanted to know how they integrated cooperative learning into their teaching strategies.

Integration Level. Thapelo and Thuto answered this question in a general manner, that is, they included all other approaches. Thuto said:

What we usually do, we use lecture, observations and mini workshops and students make presentations. This is what I always do so that they participate other than me feeding them with knowledge.

Question: Can you elaborate on the mini-workshops? Sometimes concepts differ or are used differently.

Thuto: O. K. We give them a topic to work on and then they come and present to the colleagues. Then we critique the work and then I build on what they said, so that there is not that atmosphere of, you know, that I have not contributed anything or did not offer anything to the class.

I asked a follow up question because I had a hunch that the way the lecturers understood the concepts might differ from how I had explained the approaches to them. The confusion that I experienced was between the experiential learning approaches and active learning because even Tlholo said, " I think I am familiar with, yes, (he was referring to cooperative learning) they (learners) do participatory and non-participatory as two encouraged methods at IEMS." It is not always easy to differentiate educational terms, however, according to Dewey (1938), experience is a cycle of problem, reflection, and action. Experiential learning involves active participation by the learners. Therefore, active learning forms a sub-set of experiential learning and classroom participation should not be confused to be experiential learning approach.

Question: What do you mean by participatory?

Tlholo: I think those are methods that include involvement of the learner -like group discussion method. So we believe that they are learning in groups. They are able to share experiences and even their problems. So they are able to share their experiences practically. So actually that is the method that we use. Whereas non-participatory is when the teacher comes in front of the students to deliver the goods.

From the discussions it is clear that cooperative learning and maybe even other approaches may be understood as participatory or as a group discussion method. The difference that is being emphasized by the interviewees is that their approaches are not teacher based because students are collectively involved in doing the projects. One has

to be careful that sometimes group discussions are not collective and action based. Sometimes students, still in a group, may decide to work individually and share their ideas after. Or, sometimes the discussion can only be information processing. Students can be involved in discussions without any action. Again, the cooperative learning approach is more than group work, group presentations and group discussions. It involves going to the field, encountering group problems, negotiating time with the community people to gain access to their community, negotiating and assessing the situation, conflict resolution, and taking action together. Cooperative learning involves working part-time at an organization that relates to each student's major, and full-time schooling. The purpose is to help learners gain professional experience. Clearly, the lecturers' definition of cooperative learning is that of collaborative learning.

I was encouraged when I conducted classroom observations. I noticed a lot of class participation, which to me was a good sign that if the lecturers could be more exposed to experiential learning approaches and encouraged to include them in their teaching, integrating the approaches would be easily done. I noticed that the learners I observed were not the same as the students I used to teach. The learners I observed were more articulate, which confirmed 'M'athato and Tlholo's observations that people have changed; they are now more critical than before.

Service Learning

Knowledge Level. Service learning was a new concept to most lecturers. After I explained it as I did for administrators, the majority of the lecturers said they did not know the approach. However I had a feeling that they felt that what they were doing

was more or less similar to a service learning approach because some of them shared how they involved students in the classroom. For instance, 'M'athuto said:

I haven't heard of it, but what I do is to give a group of four or five a topic and ask them to go and find as much as they can on the topic and come and report in class. We haven't had a chance where we attached them to any institution to learn or gain experience. There hasn't been any visit to any institution where students are working.

From 'M'athuto's quote, one may conclude that what she was doing is similar to collaborative learning, with some differences or some modifications to fit Lesotho's case. It is related to collaborative learning because in service learning, students volunteer their time to go to a community and do service work. As they interact with the community people, students learn about the problems that the community might be having and sometimes they (students) may help the community by suggesting some problem solving techniques.

'M'athuto said service learning involves attachment to a learning institution. Her explanation might mean that people are more familiar with attachment or apprenticeship instead of service learning. Attachment, the way 'M'athuto explained it, was more similar to in-service teaching where teachers are attached to a certain teacher to learn from her or him as a mentor. However, I avoided the use of attachment because most of the IEMS students are already working, and I wanted people to think of how they could do service learning in their respective institutions.

I also observed that 'M'athuto assigned topics to students to research instead of letting them select the topics or even decide their own topics of interest. But I also realized that the act of selecting topics for students was in agreement with what the interviewees said concerning democracy and freedom. The administrators, the lecturers

and the students said that their democracy has some level of authority. Therefore, it was normal for a lecturer to assign students topics to research.

Would the act of selecting topics for students alter the service learning approach idea? The concern in this case would be that experiential learning approaches involve democracy and freedom because it is believed that people learn more in a free and safe atmosphere; that is, an atmosphere where they are relaxed, and where their interests are high because they are motivated by the choices they make. However, Freire, in Mayo (1999), points out that the teacher controls freedom in the classroom because such a teacher has more knowledge than the students. To my understanding, the control that Freire was discussing meant guiding or helping learners to use freedom wisely. It is similar to Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, and Tarule's (1986) metaphor of an adult instructor as a "midwife" in the classroom.

'M'athlo said she was not familiar with the service learning approach, but she thought it would be good to implement it. Her reason was that it would integrate the skills the learners obtained from the field with what they learn in the classroom.

'M'athlo's statement confirmed the fears expressed in Chapter 1, that students in the Certificate in Adult Education Program of IEMS do not have the space to discuss their field experiences, or if they do it is on a minimal scale. What they know before they come to IEMS is not given the recognition it deserves.

Integration Level. Since most of the lecturers had already said the service learning approach was not familiar to them, I asked them whether it should be integrated into learning and teaching in the Certificate Program and if so, how it should be integrated. Some of them answered that it could be one of the required assignments,

even though it would not be easy to follow students or even to involve other supervisors from the workplace. The majority of the lecturers felt that time would be a problem if they integrated such an approach in the teaching and learning process. Other numerous problems that were mentioned will be discussed under barriers in Chapter 6 because they apply to all the approaches.

Assessment. I asked the question on assessment of those lecturers who suggested how the service learning approach could be integrated into the teaching and learning process. Some of them said that assessment would be discussed when the program is initially introduced during the proposal stage, while some felt that it would be hard to think of assessment as something that may not even get approved. Some were genuine enough to say that they had not thought of how it could be assessed. I also thought I was pushing too much on them because they had already said they were not familiar with the approach.

Role-Plays, Drama, and Simulations

Knowledge Level. The question regarding how the lecturers understood role-plays, drama, and simulations was not raised because during the interview discussions, most of the lecturers mentioned that they used them in their teaching and learning process. I asked how they were integrated into the learning and teaching process because, like the cooperative learning approach, they are commonly known and they can be implemented as any other methods of learning.

Integration level. I became curious to know how role-plays, drama, and simulations as experiential learning approaches are integrated into the learning process

in the lecturers' classes because their biggest weakness is they are time consuming. The lecturers said that they occasionally used the role-plays. I learned that students used them more as they demonstrated how they taught adults in the communities. For instance, some of the students, according to Tlholo, role-played activities like good breast feeding habits, or how to take care of trees.

I also asked those lecturers who use role -plays if students were resistant to participation. The answer was that most of the adult students seemed to enjoy the role-plays more than other approaches. I asked this question because some writers in adult education believe that adults may be shy to perform in the presence of other adults. Students whom I interviewed were also asked this question. Their answers will be discussed later in this chapter.

Credit for Prior Learning Assessment (CPLA)

Knowledge Level. Credit for Prior Learning Assessment was new to most lecturers. Although they had not heard of it, they felt that it would be a good approach to implement in the Certificate Program. Nevertheless, some lecturers felt it was going to be very difficult to implement such a program. Other questions were not even asked because lecturers got caught up in explaining the problems they thought would stop the program from taking off. As I said earlier in this chapter, I found myself increasingly explaining and clarifying the concept. The questions I asked focused on the amount of support lecturers would give to the idea

Support Level. The majority of the lecturers felt that the CPLA would be good, but also felt it would be a very expensive and individualized program. The assumption

was that any new program has some financial implications. I wanted to know if individualized program would cause a problem culturally because the problems that were discussed were not cultural. The problems were around the area of maintaining and managing such a program. (Read about the barriers to the approaches in Chapter 6.) Concerning individualism, people observed that experiential learning approaches are individualistic because experience itself is individual- based. However, it does not mean that the process of developing portfolios cannot be collaborative.

Feedback

Integration Level. Another technique of importance in experiential learning is feedback, that is, telling students how they are performing through marking their work or communicating on their oral presentations in the classroom. Feedback in this case is a two way process. Both lecturers and students need to give each other feedback on the lesson and whether or not it needs some changes or additions. Feedback can be both a formative and/or a summative process. That is, it can be an on-going thing in the classroom or be done formally at the end of the year as evaluation. I asked lecturers whether or not they allow students to give them feedback because I think it is important that lecturers should allow students to express their feelings about the class content as well as the approaches that are used. To me, feedback is also part of critical reflection because learners are given space to think of what they are learning and how they learn it.

The question about feedback was asked differently depending on what the discussion was about. For instance, to some the question was, "How do you apply

feedback in the classroom?" Or, "Are you open to criticisms that come from students?" Or, "How do you create space for students to give you feedback?"

The majority of lecturers felt that they opened doors for students to give them feedback in many different ways. For instance, I was intrigued by the following response:

Thuto: A lot! I'm quite open, and I always ask them. Normally what we do is we go and work on something together. If I give assignment, they work on it, I then mark it. I then write the questions on the board and say, "Let's answer the questions together." Then through answering those questions, we look at where they went wrong and I also ask them, "What do you think of my marking or even the questions- in fact everything?" Basically they always say, "Your questions are so tricky." Which is natural anyway, but I would have warned them ahead of time that the way I asked questions is that, I would want the questions to address the academic part of learning. But also experience, relate what you are learning here, with the life situations that you experienced. Those I always want them to go together- experience and academic work.

I wanted to know what *tricky* meant according to students and the answer was that it referred to questions that required students to define a concept and then utilize such a concept in their life situations. At this point nothing was said about the content that is taught and how it is taught. From a teaching perspective, feedback that followed a test was not always effective because students would be concerned about marks they received rather than their errors and why errors were made.

'M'amoruti answered the question on feedback as follows, "And particularly this year it has been terrible. I have had a group that was terrible." I asked how terrible the students were and we both laughed. She indicated that because she was a soft (kind) person, students were free to express themselves to such extent that they complained about trivial things that she failed to understand sometimes, like assignment deadlines. The use of the word terrible in this case did not mean something that was gigantic and

frightening. It meant that students were critical and free to give the lecturer feedback. It reminded me of words like inquisitive, that some educators describe as a positive sign for learning.

During classroom observation, I witnessed a lot of questions coming from students. These were not reflective questions because they were questions that needed more information, but to me they were an indication that students can be reflective if they are guided in doing so and are given such a chance.

The lecturers were also asked if they allowed their colleagues to observe them and offer feedback. The majority said they had not had a chance to invite other lecturers to observe them. The main problem mentioned was time. They were always too busy to attend each other's lectures. They agreed it would be a good idea to learn from each other. 'M'athuto further added that, " There are two things I would like: First, I would like a chance to observe my colleagues who are senior to me and have had more experience in teaching so that I can learn from them. Second, I would like an opportunity for someone to observe my teaching and give me feedback." I thought that was a very encouraging statement, and I had a feeling that many of the lecturers would benefit from such a practice. What they lacked were space, time and confidence to begin.

The Students and Some Employers' Views on Experiential Approaches

It is important to remind the reader that I had two groups of students, Certificate One students were in their first year and in their first months at IEMS, and Certificate Two students had completed one year of studying at IEMS. In asking about the

approaches, I became very cautious, especially with Certificate One students, because they had not been in the classroom long enough to know the type of approaches being used. Again, since it was their first year in college, it would not be easy for them to know some of the terminology that is used in adult education.

I also noticed as I interviewed the students individually that even though Certificate Two students were one year ahead, they did not differ that much from Certificate One students in regard to the experiential learning approaches. As a result, the focus was on the knowledge level. Other questions were not asked. Employers filled up a questionnaire that I wrote in Sesotho, but words like Credit for Prior Learning Assessment (CPLA) were not translated into Sesotho. Employers were to mark yes or no and then comment. That is, they were to agree or disagree with the explanation given in relation to service learning and CPLA and say whether or not the approach would work. Again, I wanted to sample the employers' opinions about service learning and CPLA because they would be directly involved if both the service learning and CPLA were integrated or implemented into the Certificate Program.

Cooperative Learning

Knowledge Level. Some of the Certificate Two students thought the cooperative learning approach was not practiced at IEMS. Students were more familiar with group discussions and lecture methods or collaborative learning. They said they had not experienced a time when they went to the community together as a group to do some cooperative work. Some said they were familiar with the approach at the community level, but not in the classroom. There was a slight contradiction between

lecturers who said cooperative learning is practiced and students who think it is not. A possible explanation could be what I already indicated that cooperative concept is confused with collaborative learning.

Thabiso, in Certificate One, said people still use a lot of cooperation in their day-to-day activities at his place of employment. He said he would like to see some of the community approaches integrated into the teaching and learning at IEMS because learning becomes easy when it is experiential and one does not forget what he/she does easily.

Service Learning

Knowledge Level. The service learning approach was not known to most of the students. This did not surprise me because even some of the lecturers had not heard of it. The ignorance made me aware that the service learning approach is possibly not common in Lesotho in general, or it is used in certain Ministries only. It may be that it is known by another name.

Support Level. Another question I asked was whether or not students would support a service learning approach if it were to be implemented in their programs. Some people just said it would be a good idea. Some mentioned what they do in the communities would be recognized. 'M'alerato said, 'It is good and it will be of help to me and the community people that I work for. It is nice to know that what one is doing helps people. I think the employers would like it too because what is important is to see that there is development.' According to 'M'alerato, development means new innovations in the community to help people learn about modern ways of living. From

what she said, even the community people that she worked with would appreciate what she was doing more when they noticed that it was connected with the IEMS as a University Institution. 'M'alerato further indicated that students like to be exposed to different approaches because they use them at their jobs

Some employers seemed to agree that service learning would be a good idea if it were to be included in the Certificate Program. One of the employers responded as follows: "Currently IEMS does not follow its students to the field to check on how they perform, so such an approach would help IEMS to get in contact with community people and also to help the students at their workplace." From the completed questionnaires, however, I could not tell if the employers distinguished work from community service.

However, as the students and I discussed the approach further during the focus group meetings, many issues of concern were raised. It became clear that there would be some problems because service learning is different from work that one does because she/he is employed. The problem would be how to separate the work that IEMS students already do as part of their jobs and community service as a learning approach. More of the problems will be discussed in Chapter 6.

Role-Plays, Drama, and Simulations

Knowledge Level. The majority of both groups of learners said they use role plays in their presentations. For instance, Tlotliso said he uses role-plays and demonstrations to help his groups in the community to understand what he teaches them. (He teaches people about election procedures). He said he liked them (role-plays

and demonstrations) because one does not easily forget the learning that takes place through those methods. Thabiso added that they deal with people at the work. Some of these people do not know how to read and write, so role-plays and demonstrations help them to follow the instructions. I asked if the employers would support such an approach if it would be implemented, and they answered positively. I also asked the Certificate One group if the cooperative approach is used at their workplaces because, as explained earlier, the Basotho use a lot of cooperative to do their jobs, which, from the literature, is similar to collaborative learning.

As noted by their lecturers, Certificate Two students used role-plays when they were given group work regarding a certain topic or even to show how they taught their groups in the villages. They said they initiated the use of the approach without the teacher asking. I thought that was encouraging, knowing how diverse their groups were, and that they came from different parts of the country. It is interesting to notice that when students are asked to present assignments, they use what they know best which also reveals the strategies they use to teach people in the communities.

I also asked students if they had noticed any resistance among their colleagues when asked to participate in a role-play activity. I was told that students are the ones who initiate role-plays because they enjoy them.

Credit for Prior Learning Assessment (CPLA)

Knowledge Level. Like service learning, Credit for Prior Learning Assessment was a new term to the learners, but they like the idea that their experiences would be recognized. However, like the rest of the participants, both the learners and their

employers said that although it would be a good program, it would have too many problems. Actually one of the learners, 'M'alerato, said she would prefer not to change what IEMS is doing now.

It is important to remember that I had to translate Credit for Prior Learning Assessment to Sesotho for people to understand it and immediately respond to my questions. As I pointed out earlier, I became worried that people were grappling with the meaning of the concept as well as trying to answer the questions. But having a focus group helped because students had more time to discuss the concepts among themselves and hopefully with other learners and their employers.

Those students' employers who filled in the questionnaire agreed that Credit for Prior Learning Assessment would be a good idea and one that they would support, but IEMS would need to be careful. It was not explained what IEMS should be careful about. Those who elaborated on the idea said people who go to IEMS are mature and experienced, so it would be good to recognize what they know. They said that giving them a credit in experiential learning would help them to be promoted for what they gained from long service. Those who did not support the idea clearly explained why they thought such a program would not work.

Feedback Approach

Integration Level. I asked Students if they give each other feedback. In answering that question they said they did so during presentation time. That is, after presentations, they commented on how the presentation went, including the strong parts and the weak ones. They also indicated that their teachers always asked them to

comment on some activities, or even on the course outline. However, they admitted that in most cases they kept quiet in the classroom, and talked among themselves in the absence of the teacher. The reason one of them gave was, 'Sometimes one is not used to what the teacher is teaching. Sometimes the year ends before we even get used to the teacher.'

This comment was not followed up, but I think it is very true that one can comment sensibly if what is discussed is familiar. Again, some lecturers attempt to keep a distance from the students, so much so that some learners who may be less aggressive do not know how to approach them. 'M'amoruti, the lecturer, said that since she was soft, the students that she taught were free in class. What she meant was that students could approach her because she is kind. "Soft" in Sesotho is "*bonolo*." It has double meanings. That is, soft as in soft wool and soft as in being kind.

Summary

On the whole, some of the experiential learning approaches that were discussed in this chapter were new phenomena to most people who were interviewed. To be more specific, the administrators knew about service learning even though I had a feeling that they were more familiar with *attachment* as a term for service learning.

All the administrators agreed that the program and the approaches would be a benefit to both the students and the community because it would be a way of bringing the community closer to the Institute and vice versa. Both the lecturers and students would learn more from the communities, and the communities would do the same.

Credit for Prior Learning Assessment seemed to gain much attention because it is a program more than an approach, and people wanted to know more about it. Even though many of the administrators said they would support it, their support was conditional because of their belief that it had inherent problems.

The majority of the lecturers were not familiar with the approaches, especially service learning and the Credit for Prior Learning Assessment Program. I also had a hunch that even the cooperative learning approach may not have meant the same in the classroom as it did in the communities, or its application to the students was not very clear. Again, the way the interviewees understood cooperative learning is how Bruffee (1999) explains collaborative learning. What was more encouraging for the study was that some lecturers started to seriously think about the importance of experience in the learning environment. From classroom observation, I learned that some lecturers were already trying to integrate what students learn with what they do in their respective communities.

I must point out that even though some lecturers were impressed with the approaches, they also were aware that these approaches would require a lot of time for preparation and a flexible curriculum. Another concern I have is that lecturers at IEMS are hired on yearly contracts. Other lecturers who will be hired next year may have a different opinion or even support the approaches more.

Students and employers agreed that such approaches would be an advantage to them because IEMS would follow students to the communities and help them to do even better. They also felt that students who join IEMS have some experiences that are ignored, and that if such experiences were integrated into the learning environment,

learning would be more relevant. Students would be bringing into the learning situation the expertise of how local people live, how they solve their problems, and how they could be helped to better solve such problems. The Institute's mission statement is all about taking University services to the people, as explained in Chapter 1.

The students and their employers were not blind to the problems that would be experienced in introducing such approaches, and they felt that if the approaches were tried, IEMS should be very careful. Exactly what they meant becomes more clear in Chapter 6. I must say that for the employers, I thought their concern was directed more toward the service learning approach than the Credit for Prior Learning Assessment Program. This is reasonable, though, because they would play a bigger role in supervising and helping to assess the learners if the service learning were to be implemented.

Conclusion and Overview of the Next Chapter

From the discussions in this chapter, according to the administrators and some lecturers, experiential learning approaches like collaborative (understood to be cooperative learning) learning, role-plays, and reflective thinking are already in practice. According to students, more work will need to be done to make sure that they are fully implemented.

Service learning, cooperative learning (as defined in the literature), and Credit for Prior Learning Assessment would be a benefit to the learners, the lecturers, the community and the University if implemented because theory and practice would be

integrated. However, issues that may prevent the smooth implementation of the approaches will need to be addressed first.

In Chapter 6, the discussion will address the barriers in implementing the approaches, especially service learning, cooperative learning, and Credit for Prior Learning Assessment Program.

CHAPTER 6

BARRIERS AND POSSIBILITIES TO EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING APPROACHES

This chapter examines barriers and possibilities in implementing experiential learning approaches in the Certificate in Adult Education program of the Institute of Extra Mural Studies (IEMS) of the National University of Lesotho (NUL). In Chapter 4, I explained that the study investigates Experiential Learning Theory in the Certificate in Adult Education Program. Chapter 4 explored the meaning of key concepts in experiential learning theory such as experience, democracy, freedom, and equality. Chapter 5 explored various experiential learning approaches such as cooperative learning, service learning, role-plays, and credit for prior learning assessment. The purpose was to find out if these approaches were integrated into the Certificate Program and, if not, whether they would be supported if they were to be implemented. Chapter 6 attempts to answer two important questions: What would be the barriers if experiential learning approaches were to be integrated in the curriculum of the Certificate Program? What would be the barriers if a Credit for Prior Learning Assessment Program were to be implemented in the Certificate Program in Adult Education in Lesotho?

Why do I focus on the barriers? My own experience and the literature tell me that if anything new is tried, there are bound to be barriers because often people resist change. Experiential approaches, including credit for prior learning assessment, are based on past experiences that people have. It has already been mentioned that some people might not like to discuss past experiences. I believe that knowing about the

barriers would help in the planning and implementation of experiential learning approaches.

As in the two earlier chapters, the discussions in this chapter are based on the responses from the three levels of participants: the administrators, the lecturers, and the students and their employers. The responses come from the interviews, class observations and information from some IEMS official documents that relate to the Certificate Program. The employers' information is based on a questionnaire that they filled out; as a result, their data is not as detailed as the data from the rest of the participants. The grand tour questions for this section were as follows:

What would be the barriers in implementing experiential learning approaches?

How would such barriers be overcome?

What would be your opinion if Certificate students in Adult Education would present their projects through the use of stories, drama, pictures, or artifacts?

During the interviews, as in the previous chapters, I used Sesotho language and switched to English where I could not use Sesotho. All participants were free to switch from one language to the other or to use the language they felt comfortable with if they were bilingual.

With regard to translating English words, the word *barrier* was easily replaced by *bothata* as a perfectly fitting Sesotho word. In the presentation of the data, where Sesotho was used, the English translation is found in single quotation marks.

The analysis and interpretation follows the pattern I used in the previous chapters. That is, themes form the main approach of analysis. The barriers to experiential learning approaches are classified into those that (1) address the Certificate

Program structure or the University of Lesotho's bureaucracy and rigidity; (2) attitudes, standards, time, resources (human and material); and (3) content, language, group size, and class attendance.

The Administrators' Views Regarding Barriers in Implementing Experiential Learning Approaches

The Structure of the Certificate Program

Rigid and Non-flexible Structure. The main concern of some of the administrators was that the structure of the Certificate Program is not flexible enough to allow integration of any practical activities. The structure has a fixed course syllabus that has to be completed within a given time. Students are required to take and pass a fixed number of courses in order to graduate. For instance, Certificate One Program offers three courses as follows (These courses are discussed in detail in Chapter 1): Communication Skills 1, Learning and Teaching in Adult Education, and Principles of Adult Education. Certificate Two's are Organization and Implementation of Community Programs, Adult Education Practice in Lesotho, and Adult Education and the Community. The descriptions for each course are attached in Appendix A.

'M'athabo indicated that such a structure would not allow for approaches that need a lot of hands-on activities. She felt that a program like Credit for Prior Learning Assessment would need a more 'flexible structure, not a rigid and formal structure like the one the Certificate program is following'. In explaining the rigidity further, many of

the administrators, like Lenepa for instance, felt that students follow a fixed timetable. They start school at 8.45 a.m. and finish at 4.00 p.m. (see schedule in Appendix B).

Another observation was that students need course work before they can write an examination. Course work consists of class attendance, two written assignments, and a test. The course work weighs 50% of the final grade. The final examination that students write at the end of the year weighs another 50%. Both grades are weighted to give a student a final grade. So the question was, how would Credit for Prior Learning Assessment fit in such a structure?

I explained how the University Without Walls Program is run without making people feel that I was defensive. That is, I didn't want people to think that I didn't believe or understand their concerns, but I also was aware that many of their questions were asked because they didn't know the UWW Program very well. (University Without Walls brochure is attached as Appendix C). I explained that the UWW program is a University program that has a curriculum to follow and students are also assessed based on the projects that they write. However, there are other things that need to be considered if the new program is implemented. For instance, University Without Walls students can register in full time University Programs, whereas with IEMS Certificate students, that would not be possible.

For argument's sake, there are two assignments and a test. A test is written in class. The two assignments are composed of work that is done away from school. One would think that some of the topics for such assignments could involve collaborative learning approaches or role-plays. However, lecturers' concerns regarding field-based assignments are addressed later in the paper.

Negative Attitudes

Some administrators felt that some University Senators have negative attitudes towards IEMS programs. One reason that was given was that the majority of the University academic staff members are full time staff who do not know much about how adult education part time programs should be run. Some administrators recalled how they struggled to get their programs approved. 'You remember at one time we were accused of admitting policemen in our program?' 'M'athabo said. Some Senators did not see the relevancy of a policeman in adult education program.

'M'athato also indicates that in implementing experiential learning approaches, there would be a need to consider the attitudes of the learners, the employers, and the family members because the experiential learning approaches will need more commitment and time from the learners to do their projects. "Attitudes of all the people will need to be changed starting with the learners, tutors, administrators, employers, and spouses," 'M'athato said. The point that is brought up regarding family members and the employers is a crucial one because the learners will need more support of those around them. Learning will be a shared process in the community as it used to be traditionally. This does not mean learning is not shared currently, but sometimes the status and the academic standards determine who should be involved, and often only certified community people can share.

Teachers and learners would need to be asked if they would be interested in such a program. Some teachers may not be committed to teach experientially and some learners too may not feel comfortable to learn from their experiences because they lack confidence in what they know. 'M'athabo said, 'We still try to implement some of the

ideas like we say we draw from the learners' experiences, but some people are still resisting because they say what they are doing, like sewing pillowcases, cannot be important.' She further pointed out that for some people to accept new innovations, they (innovations) must be of value or they must have heard other people talk about their importance. As Belenky et al. (1986) pointed out, women think being a housewife is not an important skill. For instance to sew a pillowcase is a skill that requires accuracy, the mixing of colors, which stitch to use, and the size of the pillow.

'M'athabo's point is very important in a country like Lesotho where some people's orientations are that anything good is foreign. Some people, from my experience, find it hard to relate to traditional ways of living. However, learning from experience does not necessarily mean being traditional. It means reflecting on day-to-day living activities. For instance, it would be interesting to know how people who do not know how to read and write keep record of how many cattle or sheep they have, or how they survive during years of drought and famine, or how people learn how to organize themselves and plan economic projects like burial societies, or how people set up local banks like Christmas funds. I believe that through experiential learning approaches, students could also learn how to sustain the life of their projects because they will learn ways of negotiating, reflecting, and making decision objectively.

Regarding employers, as mentioned in Chapter 5, sometimes employer's attitudes can be influenced by negative attitudes towards assisting students and learning from the process. For instance, it has already been mentioned in Chapter 1 how some employers may find it hard to help promote another person to become their boss.

Learners' Academic Standards

In referring to standards, some administrators felt that the Credit for Prior Learning Program, if implemented at the Certificate level, would presuppose that IEMS students perform very well in their studies. Some administrators' concerns were that performance at Certificate level might not be that good because students have junior high or high school Certificates that are considered to be at a low level. When I tried to explain what is happening at the University Without Walls' Program, some participants felt that IEMS students could not be compared to UWW students for various reasons. For instance, 'M'athabo said that UWW students have an advantage of attending Community Colleges or Continuing Education programs, and Accreditation Boards, facilities that Lesotho does not have.

According to Thuso, all University Programs should attain a certain academic standard. He felt that the Credit for Prior Learning Assessment is a good program and he could support it. He also indicated that although the Program might be approved at the IEMS Academic Board, it might be rejected at the Senate level because people may think that introducing such a program would lower the University standards. He said IEMS people would have to work very hard to convince Senators that the program is relevant not only to the Certificate Program but also to all IEMS Adult Education Programs.

Thuso felt that the University Senators would be concerned about the students' academic standards, but other IEMS administrators were concerned that Certificate students might not be able to cope with some of the experiential approaches, especially the Credit for Prior Learning Assessment. Both concerns are an indication that IEMS

people might be divided in their opinions/feelings about the approaches concerning the students' academic abilities.

An interesting question is, why do the administrators consider the lowering of standards to be a possible reason for Credit for Prior Learning Assessment Program to be rejected at the University Senate. This Program, as mentioned earlier, is based on past experience. It means assessing what students have learned from their experience before coming to IEMS. At one time in the history of the National University of Lesotho, "a Mature-age Program" was introduced. The program was based on participants' past experiences. Those who applied to enroll in that program wrote a Mature-age Entry Test, and if they passed it, they were admitted into the University as full time students. There is a Sesotho expression that says '*thebe e seheloa holim'a e 'ngoe*.' The nearest English translation would be 'a new shield is cut over an old one'. A new problem forces one to remember how a similar one that happened in the past was solved. I may be wrong, but I assume that when the Mature-age Program was launched, one of the concerns might have been that University academic standards would be lowered. It could be one of the reasons that it was discontinued.

Through observing the University Without Walls program, I noticed that instead of standards being lowered, learning becomes very intensive and higher in quality because the learner is learning how to learn, how to be critical, and how to communicate well. However, I am aware that the comparison I am making might not be a fair one. As 'M'athabo said, I cannot keep on comparing the University Without Walls Program (UWW) with what might happen in Lesotho because sometimes experiences are not easily transferred. Nevertheless, people learn from others' experiences and mistakes, so

I believe IEMS can select what is relevant from the UWW Program and learn how the Program was introduced within the University of Massachusetts structure.

Time

Limited Time. Some of the administrators reported time as a barrier in implementing experiential learning approaches. Lenepa said, " Take role-plays for instance, they take all time to prepare so that by the time you finish, the year is gone and you have not covered all the year's work." It would also be difficult to follow students to the field if service learning requires lecturers to supervise students when they are at work.

Another factor that relates to time is how the schedule is arranged (see Appendix B). The course schedule has a fixed timetable. When a teacher leaves the classroom, another enters, so that if one teacher goes a little beyond his/her time, he/she would be using another teacher's time. Lenepa said, "Bringing in a new innovation is not easy." He further said, " Think of the culture of IEMS and the University. It is hard here because we follow course descriptions, you teach a, b, and c and finish up. You give the assignments and more."

These arguments seemed to say the problem is that lecturers now have more to do within a given time frame than time allows. Yet on second thought, I think that the problem with academic formal programs is that a lot of content has to be taught within a short time and with little or no practice on the part of both the teacher and the students. In Chapter 5, lecturers confirmed that they use lecture method because of the time against content problem.

Resources

Qualified Personnel. Those administrators who mentioned resources as a barrier in implementing experiential learning approaches, in particular credit for prior learning assessment, felt that human resources would be important to consider. 'M'athato said that implementing the Program would depend on the type of tutors the Institute has. She said it would be asking too much of the lecturers if they were not trained to teach such a Program. To use her words: " The idea is good, but you also need a different type of a tutor who will be doing this work. Who will be your tutors in this case? Do you have sufficient human resources?"

Content

Relevant Content. Some administrators raised another important point regarding content. Service learning and the Credit for Prior Learning Assessment Program seem to assume that Certificate students already know the content of what they want to learn. That is, they know the theory; they have joined IEMS programs only to learn about the approaches, but that is not the case. Some of the questions some people asked were, " Why have students enrolled in the Certificate Program? What do they want to achieve?" The assumption and these questions, to me, were a sign that more clarification of experiential learning approaches was needed. Course content should be considered as a priority as the experiential learning approaches are discussed. Students' needs should also play a role in deciding the content and how to teach it.

One other question of interest would be how relevant the course content is. A close examination of the course descriptions (Appendix A) shows that the content that is

described for each course is very relevant and practical; however, a lot depends on the individual course syllabi and how each topic is treated in the classroom. From observing some lectures in the classroom, I noticed that many concepts that were introduced needed clarification and more examples that were locally based because they were foreign to most of the learners. For instance, in Certificate One, concepts like adult education, adult learner, self-directed learner, formal education vs. non-formal education, facilitator and many more needed further discussion before students could read about them in the difficult texts written in the West.

Language

English Language. The language that is used in the classroom at the Institute is English. Even though Sesotho is said to be an official language in Lesotho, it is hardly used on formal occasions because most of the materials that are used are written in English. All the books that are used at IEMS, for academic purposes, are written in English; however, some of the Certificate students who are working with communities in the rural areas use Sesotho to teach or communicate with their learners. The implication is that they (the students) translate what they are taught at IEMS to Sesotho so that people in the communities can understand the content that is taught. The question is: When they are at IEMS, do they really have to be taught in English, knowing that their work requires very little or no English?

However, I had a hunch that the administrators did not feel like English language was the issue in this case because I had to mention it to them in order for it to

be discussed. In contrast, the lecturers brought the subject up. Maybe the obvious reason is that some administrators do not teach, or if they do, they teach the higher classes.

Those administrators who responded felt that the language problem is a difficult issue to address. It is something that cannot be solved in a day because people value the English language for survival and communication purposes with the outside world.

‘M’athabo put her argument in the following manner: " But we will not be preparing this person to go into the world of work if he wants to compete for anything. Even when this person wants to go out on his/her own, she/he will not benefit from our program if we are going to be using Sesotho language." Issues that would need to be reconsidered in a debate over the language issue would be: What is the purpose of the Certificate Program? What is the mission statement of IEMS in relation to Certificate Program?

Administrators’ Suggestions on How to Overcome the Barriers

Some administrators made very good and thoughtful suggestions regarding implementation of the Credit for Prior Learning Assessment Program. However, their suggestions did not cover all the concerns that were raised earlier. Administrators had several concerns.

Rigid Structure

Some people felt the need for Certificate course descriptions to be reviewed to make them more flexible. The course descriptions need to be changed to make them more explicitly experiential because currently it is assumed that lecturers are including participatory experiential approaches in their teaching. ‘M’athabo indicated that the

policy of the department should demand each teacher to be practice oriented in teaching. That is each class must have hands-on activities.

Implementation

In implementing Credit for Prior Learning Assessment, some administrators suggested a number of possibilities:

It is better that such a program is non-credit and non-formal, yet we make it as intensive as need be. Learners should take some years in it, but be able to push themselves to perform well. The course should qualify them to enroll into the Diploma Program. It should be taken as a remedial course.

Maybe, I think it will need to be proven that it will work or it is working, maybe a trial base, a mini project that will show the difference between what is being done now and the new program. Needs assessments need to be done first because you need the cooperation, the support and the need to implement a new program.

The approaches are good, but a new phenomenon because people will want to know what is happening. You will need to introduce them little by little, like by starting with some assignments not with the whole program. Maybe start with service learning and follow them and see what they are doing. Generally, students themselves have been introduced into this culture where nothing else but this formal Western type of education is the only thing they recognize. Experiential programs of any type will need to be implemented with caution. (Note: There was a lot of switching from Sesotho to English in some quotes.)

Administrators' Views on the Use of Stories, Drama, Pictures, or Artifacts

The last question that I asked administrators was how they would feel if Certificate students used stories, drama, pictures or artifacts as a solution to the language problem. Language would be a problem if the Credit for Prior Learning Assessment Program were introduced because students would be expected to do a lot of

writing, reading, and oral reporting. The use of stories, drama, or artifacts would be acceptable, but they would need to be implemented with caution because it would be a new approach to teaching and both students and teachers would need to be familiar with it. However, there were some people who still mentioned the rigid structure of the Certificate Program and the University's bureaucracy. That is, whether such an innovation would be accepted and if it would, how would assessment be carried out? Many more issues that were raised earlier were raised again.

The Lecturers' Views Regarding Barriers in Implementing the Experiential Learning Approaches

The lecturers' views seemed to differ from the administrators' views because of their different situation. As lecturers, they meet students every day in class, and they are the ones who decide what is taught in the classroom through the course outlines they create. From the course description they select the content to teach and the approaches to effectively teach the content. Another factor that contributed to the difference of opinions is the fact that some of the lecturers are not directly dealing with the IEMS administrative matters because they are part time lecturers.

There were some similarities and differences of emphasis among the lecturers in discussing the barriers. However, the majority of the lecturers, like the administrators, concentrated on the Credit for Prior Learning Assessment Program.

The Structure of the Certificate Program

Rigid and Non-flexible Structure. A few lecturers who said the Certificate structure is rigid described the past experiences they had with other Adult Education Programs. They recalled how difficult it was for other programs to be smoothly implemented because of the Senators' queries that such programs were not meeting the standards of the University. Thapelo said, "So if we then introduce Credit for Prior Learning Assessment, I find it difficult how we can really evaluate it and assess adequately to any mark especially since the University still goes through a process of attendance this, examination that, and many more." He further alluded to the problem of the University's bureaucracy that has to be involved before any program can be approved.

Thapelo's concern over attendance will be addressed as one of the issues that would need attention because even other lecturers supported his idea that it would be a barrier to the possible introduction of the Credit for Prior Learning Assessment. He further explained what he meant by the University's bureaucracy: some of the Senators always complain that they have not been exposed to many things regarding IEMS Programs. According to him, it is as though the language that IEMS uses is different from that used by Senators.

'M'athuto added that Credit for Prior Learning Assessment would be a good Program, but it would need a flexible structure. She answered as follows:

'M'athuto: But something like that I think needs to have been built into our Program - being flexible, which we don't have much of at the present moment.

Question: Do you mean there is no flexibility in the Certificate Program?

‘M’athuto: Not much that can allow that kind of approach you are talking about because, for example, for each course you’re supposed to have done three assignments by the time the students write examinations.

‘M’athuto, like the administrators, is concerned about the fact that there are fixed tests and examinations for course work that students have to write. The concern is how Credit for Prior Learning Program might fit in a structure where students have to write an examination?

Another element that some lecturers noted was the bureaucracy that IEMS would have to involve negotiating or making arrangements with those organizations that it would work with if a service learning approach were to be implemented. Reference was particularly made to service learning because of the direct involvement that the community people would have should that approach be implemented. I also observed a turn of focus in relation to the bureaucracy. In this case the concern was not with the University, but with the community people. The contrast is justified because some lecturers deal more with the community than the University.

The bureaucracy with the community people is high too because, from my interview experience, I had to notify the immediate boss to the student who I wanted to interview a week, before the interview. That boss had to notify his/her boss. The chain goes until it reaches the top boss. A meeting or dialogue would need to be held for each level depending on the seriousness of the issue to be discussed.

Time

Almost all the lecturers mentioned time as the main barrier to implementing experiential learning approaches, especially the Credit for Prior Learning Assessment.

Limited Time. For instance, in Thapelo's view the time is short because the Certificate Program operates over the weekend. Students arrive on Saturday morning and stay until Sunday at 4:00 p.m., or 4:30 p.m. In the past, students used to travel long distances in order to attend IEMS Programs for the weekend, and they returned home late on Sunday afternoons. Because of the rush to return home, they did not have enough time for group discussions after class or even to use the library facilities. The good news is that IEMS has introduced Adult Education Programs in the North and South of the country.

Thapelo further indicated that, most students complain about lack of time when they are at home because the majority of them are women who are parents and workers, and have other roles they are expected to play in their communities. He said that the new Program, if implemented, would be a problem time wise. Thuto added that the Credit for Prior Learning Program might not work because of time. He said, "We don't really have time to allow that one because if I understand it well, it demands a lot of work on the students' part that they go back to look at themselves and account on the past learning experiences." "Account" in this case means "reflect" on the past experiences.

Time to Attach Students to Organizations. 'M'athuto's response also elaborated on the problem of time if the learning approaches would be integrated into the curriculum. I had asked the following question:

Question: What is your opinion about integrating what students do in the community or what they learn so that they improve on their jobs.

‘M’athuto: Yes, I can see what you are getting at, but I think we have a problem of time amongst others. The time to attach to or actually live their work and be attached to other areas.

From the response, I got the impression that ‘M’athuto was thinking primarily about service learning because I had just explained what each approach meant. Again, it seems as though in her mind she was thinking of those students who don’t have a job, who would need to be attached/apprenticed to some organizations. Otherwise, as indicated earlier, the majority of IEMS students don’t need new placements because they are already working in different organizations.

At this point, I assumed that part time lecturers would also mention time as a barrier to them should such a program be implemented because their first commitment is to their full time jobs. If such a Program were implemented, lecturers would be expected to play an even bigger role of assisting the learners to identify what they learned and present that learning to evaluators. They would need to correct what students wrote, give feedback and facilitate the whole process until the end. However, everybody avoided commenting on the issue of time in relation to the fact that they had two jobs. Even those lecturers whom I asked about the pressures they experienced working in two jobs did not want to admit that they experienced time problems. I also became aware that such a question was putting people on the spot because they want to keep their part time jobs.

Commitment and Motivation. Some concepts that kept on coming up that relate to time were commitment and motivation on the part of the learners. People felt that

Credit for Prior Learning Assessment Program would need learners who drive themselves, who work independently of their lecturers. Students would need time to spend in order to work on their projects, reading, writing, speaking, and listening to the comments. Some lecturers mentioned motivation as connected to commitment. If the students would not be motivated to their projects, they would not be committed to finish them.

Reading Orientation. Another point that was mentioned by the lecturers was slow reading on the part of the students. It was pointed out that the learners spend time reading the material they are given because they don't have a reading orientation. There was fear that it might be impossible for some students at Certificate level to do library research and read what they want to read fast. Other lecturers said the problem is not only with slowness in reading; some students don't give themselves enough time to read. They complain about time, and say that they have other things to do. Writing was not mentioned as a problem.

The idea that Certificate students don't seem to like reading or that reading is not in their culture was confirmed at the time that I observed their classes. One of the lecturers in Certificate One had asked each student to share with the rest of the class his/her hobbies and why he/she came to IEMS Program. Out of the thirty -seven students that responded, only two said they liked to read. The lecturer confirmed my observation and said that the students were uneasy when they learned that they were going to do library search that early in the course. This point of students being assigned work the first day of class was discussed in Chapter 5.

Content

Content Relevancy. Some of the lecturers had some concerns regarding content if Credit for Prior Learning Assessment were to be implemented in the Certificate Programs. For instance, Tlholo asked the following question, "How would it be done in other subjects like Sociology?" I wondered why he asked about Sociology, because it is not taught at Certificate level. One possible reason might be that he was already thinking ahead, that is, if the Program is introduced at Diploma level. Other lecturers, like administrators, thought that the content at Certificate level would not cater to the Credit for Prior Learning Assessment Program.

They did not elaborate on the idea, but one may assume that they were referring to course content, that so much is taught already that there would not be room to include the Program. Some of the lecturers wanted to know how the content that is taught would accommodate such a Program. For instance Tlholo indicated that one of his students said, "You know when I came to IEMS, I thought I was going to learn adult kind of stuff, but it's like I am at the University." That is, the student felt that the content that was taught was high-level content like what is taught at the University. From my experience of teaching in that Certificate Program, for some students, adult education should deal with practical things that adults do or need to know in the field because some used to say they came back to IEMS to improve their skills on training other adults.

Another point related to content was that students would need some kind of a theory. The lecturers said that students come to IEMS because they need some theory,

since they practice a lot of things in the workplace. There was some skepticism that this new Program might not have enough theory for students. Thuto said,

But at the same time I see a lot of disparities in terms of the needs as they will come because (a pause) if, for instance, I come as say, a nutritionist, or a builder, or someone else comes as a nurse, you know, to bring that information together and consolidate it into something, that is, yes, something that can be a content for this kind of a Program would not be easy.

The point that Thuto was raising is very important because he was aware of content implications should such a Program be implemented. I shared my experiences as I observed the University Without Walls Program. That is, the students were writing about their own individual experiences, some were writing as builders as he mentioned, some as journalists, or artists. Credit for Prior Learning is about individual experiences; however, there is need to have content that is relevant for such a Program. From observing the University Without Walls Program, I noticed that Credit for Prior Learning works best with an individualized degree. That is, each student follows his/her own program; however, that may not be a step that IEMS would like to follow because the Certificate Program is not a degree program. Content implications will be discussed in Chapter 7.

Attitudes

Negative Attitudes. The lecturers did not directly discuss the idea of attitudes in the same manner that the administrators did. However, those lecturers who alluded to attitudes said people in Lesotho still appreciate what comes from outside the country more than what is locally based. Some people don't seem to appreciate what they have

unless they travel and start to compare what they get outside with what their country can offer. Thuto, for instance, argued his point as follows:

Yes, 'M'e, you know the imperialist kind of mentality destroys us. Where I was, when I was given an assignment, I always thought of home. How such assignment could be relevant to my home situation as a Mosotho person. But you come home you still find people looking elsewhere – other than the home-based experiences. Somebody has come up with a phrase that I like which is 'homegrown experiences.' If we could go that way, we could have a foot in the door.

There are two ideas that seem to stand out from Thuto's comment. First, it is the resistance towards innovations, especially if such innovations are locally based.

'M'athabo raised the same issue when she said that unless a new idea is valued, or people have heard about its importance, it may not be accepted. The second point that Thuto is raising relates to traveling. Sometimes when one is outside one's country, there is time to reflect about one's identity and what you own, how you can develop what you own so that it becomes a better something.

I share Thuto's concerns, but I am also aware that there is more to what he is bringing up: the whole issue of, who is suggesting change? What impact will the change have and for whom? This issue involves the political, social, as well as economic issues that may not be handled at this point. Or was Thuto saying that people might not like to deal with their past experience or what they know locally? Or perhaps Thuto was reminding me that there had been other scholars like me who came back from the study area with a lot of good innovations, but those innovations were never implemented because resistance was too strong.

Students' Needs. Another issue that seems to relate to attitudes is students' needs. The majority of the lecturers pointed out the importance of paying attention to

students' needs in learning, to the question of why have they come back to IEMS. To be specific, the concern was about giving the students a Certificate. Some people felt that students come to IEMS to get a certificate so they can get a better paying job. If the Credit for Prior Learning Assessment Program was not going to help them get a recognized certificate, their attitudes would be negative towards it.

During my classroom observation, students in Certificate One were asked why they came to IEMS. Out of about 30 plus students, only two mentioned money, that they wanted to get a qualifying Certificate in order to get a better paying job. Those who said they were not working responded that they enrolled in the Program so that they would get employed after the training. As Jacks (1929 in Knowles, 1978) indicates, it is not easy to separate earning from living. On second thought, those who said they wanted to improve on their skills in order to become better educators for adults were probably thinking of how a good University Certificate would lead to promotion and better pay for themselves. From working at the IEMS Certificate Program and from being a Mosotho, most students, and the people believe that holding a University Certificate leads to recognition and better paying job.

Language

The majority of the lecturers mentioned language as the main barrier in implementing Credit for Prior learning Assessment. They indicated that it would be difficult for the students to express themselves in English. More on the language issue will be discussed in the last chapter.

Resources

Human and Material Resources. Some lecturers mentioned resources, both human and material, as a barrier. Like the administrators, some of the lecturers noticed that there would be a need to have trained people to teach the new programs and integrate experiential learning in their teaching. For instance, Thapelo pointed out that the curriculum had just been reviewed to make it as practical as possible, but if lecturers are not knowledgeable about experiential approaches, they may not include them in their teaching. He made an observation that sometimes a teacher who is supposed to be teaching knitting may teach it theoretically without even bringing in the equipment to the classroom. He further said:

But I think it depends on implementation of any curriculum. There is not how you can say this is the line of demarcation, this is the cognitive, the affective, or whatever the domain. Or this is experiential learning that I am doing. I think it depends on how well articulate the lecturers are to be able to focus. In any thing you do, you can build experiential learning to it if that individual is also knowledgeable in experiential learning or at least he/she could do it.

The last two sentences impressed me because good teaching in the classroom depends on the lecturer. Thus, a lecturer must have knowledge and the training in experiential learning techniques. It is important to have trained manpower in this case because the Credit for Prior Learning Assessment Program is a special and complex program that would need someone who knows its ups and downs very well. Otherwise it can lead to the laissez faire situation that one of the lecturers mentioned in Chapter 4.

Again, some of the full time lecturers raised a concern that the Certificate Program depends on part time lecturers, people who are committed elsewhere. Like ‘M’athabo, Thapelo mentioned the fact that if part time lecturers would not teach, the

Program would be in great danger. He said, " If we have this gigantic project here and we have to still divert, how can we manage?"

Books. Another barrier that was mentioned relates to material resources, such as relevant books, modern technology such as electricity, and appropriate classroom facilities. For instance, some people felt that there are not enough relevant books. The majority of the books are written in the West for a different clientele. The lecturers said that they use them for theory, but use home-based examples for clarifications and comparisons. However, from my experience, it is not always the case that lecturers are critical of these books. Sometimes the theories are used as though they were Bible stories that have to be believed by all Christians.

During classroom observation, I also had a feeling that the Western concepts that kept coming up such as facilitator, were used randomly without anyone really thinking about their meaning. If I may extend my argument, in Sesotho facilitator means 'motsamaisi.' 'Motsamaisi' is a noun from the verb 'tsamaea' to walk. Thus, the term means to walk through, to help, to guide one through some discussions. What was not clear was whether students understood what the word meant.

To add to my argument, 'M'athuto said that sometimes lecturers make a lot of assumptions about students who enroll at IEMS Certificate Program. She said, "Not every learner is a self-directed learner." In her words, she said:

O.K. I agree with you there. We should not just take those Western ideas as they are; possibly we should modify them according to our experiences. For example, taking the idea of self-directed learner into consideration, my experience is that it is not everybody that sets off as being self-directed. Some few students are, others are not. So self-directedness can be an assumption, in some cases it is a goal. We have to try and assist our learners towards attaining that self-directedness, but we

first cannot set with the assumption that everybody in this class must be self-directed and hence there will be different stages of self-directedness, but we should see self-directedness more as a goal we want learners to be at eventually.

Large Groups

Insufficient Classroom Space. Lecturers are dealing with the students most of the time, so they were more aware of all the problems than were the administrators. The last barrier that was really obvious even during classroom observation was that large groups of students are admitted at one time. In the Certificate One class, lecturers could hardly move around before the class was split into two groups. Some lecturers said every year they do not teach fewer than thirty students. The implication of a large group is among others, poor feedback on the students' writing because it takes time to thoroughly read their work.

Attendance

Poor Attendance. A few lecturers alluded to attendance problems among Certificate students, and in my experience, many students used to absent themselves on weekends. The implication was that lecturers had to introduce a new topic twice in order to help those who were absent to catch up with the rest of the class. Those who brought up the issue of attendance said it would be difficult to assess students in the new Program if they continuously missed classes.

Lecturers' Suggestions on Possible Ways of Implementing Experiential Approaches

Implementation Possibilities

Like the administrators, the lecturers had numerous ideas about how to implement the approaches, particularly Credit for Prior Learning Assessment. A few that would be of interest are as follows:

If we have this gigantic project here and we still divert out, how can we manage it? How would students create time? Even if it is week -end they still meet, how much of the time can they create? So there are implications and time implications for every stem. I am not ruling this out, we can have an experimental program of this nature and see how well it will compare with the old fashioned thing we are doing now. So that is how we can really come out at least, from the scientific point of view, rather than ruling it out completely.

No we can have a problem implementing such Credit for Prior Learning Assessment especially to Certificate level. It would be good if it would be introduced at In-Service Training courses, not in a formal Program like this one. Or it could be applied as a method of teaching like any other methods.

There is need to work out mechanisms of putting such ideas to place, mechanisms here at the Institute as well as arrangements and agreements between the Institute and the employers or whoever will be concerned. Also, there is need for modifications, adjustments or whatever. We may need to re-define concepts and curriculum.

I think this Program, if it is implemented, will be meeting the needs of these students because there will be a need for needs assessment. There will be a need for a lot of campaigning to be done really because I will tell you something, adult education if you ask what it is, we still see it as a literacy and innumeracy, we don't see it beyond that, and I don't think that it is what adult education is.

It is interesting to realize that one of the lecturers, like some administrators, thinks that Credit for Prior Learning Program can work better in a non-formal setting than in a formal one. IEMS has a Division that runs non-formal projects like chicken

rearing, sewing, literacy groups, piggery, training for local chiefs, etc. NFE Division organizes training workshops for the groups in these projects. The participants may be given Certificate of attendance. One question would be, how intensive the training sessions would be? How effective are the current NFE training projects. I was impressed by the suggestion made that the Program could be tried on an experimental basis.

Lecturer's Views on the Use of Stories, Drama, Role-plays or Artifacts

The majority of the lecturers did not seem to have a problem with the idea that students could be allowed to use some stories, drama, role-plays or artifacts. They added that it would be a good idea because some could use music. Traditionally, music is very powerful in Basotho culture. The songs carry a message to the people, so integrating music could be good teaching. Some lecturers wanted to be sure that there would be some written reports that would supplement the oral presentations. Oral examinations alone, without reports, would not be acceptable. There was an understanding that such demonstrations would reduce the amount of writing the learners would otherwise have to do.

Students' and Some Employers' Views Regarding Barriers in Implementing the Experiential Learning Approaches

This was a difficult section for students because Certificate Ones had just joined the Program, as indicated earlier, and Certificate Twos had only one year of experience. As students, they must have felt that the approaches would help them out because they

would be based on practical work; they would be expected to be physically involved in knowledge construction most of the time. Students' responses were not that elaborate, so the structure of this essay is going to change slightly. That is, the barriers and the possibilities will be discussed at the same time to avoid unnecessary repetition.

Implementation

Most of the students felt that experiential learning approaches, especially service learning and Credit for Prior Learning Assessment, would be advantageous if they were implemented. Some saw language as the main barrier but said that the barrier could be overcome through enrolling in English language courses. However, 'M'alerato influenced her colleagues' opinions about the Program when she said:

We will need teachers who will be knowledgeable in different content matter. Another problem is the number of students that attend the IEMS Programs- many of them come from different government Ministries. Out of thirty-five students in the class, each Ministry has about two students. So it would be difficult to cater for such diversity if the Program is going to consider each person's interests. It would be difficult to satisfy everybody.

'M'alerato's concerns are similar to her lecturers that students who enroll in the Certificate Program represent different Ministries and so they would need different content. To me experiential approaches would be perfect to address the differences because they are individualized. Each person would be discussing what happens in his/her Ministry. However, I am not ruling out the fact that content that would be relevant to Credit for Prior Learning Assessment would be required. Content and theory would also be part of it.

Time

Some students were aware that experiential learning approaches need more time to prepare. As a result, they suggested that what IEMS is doing now is fine. The main problem was that some employers refuse to sign a contract for some employees who want to attend IEMS Programs. The majority of the students sneak out on the weekends in order to attend school. So if approaches like service learning or Credit for Prior Learning Assessment were to be introduced, many students would not be able to attend courses because they would not be granted permission to. Why would they not be given permission?

Attitudes

Negative Attitudes. Some of the employers said that it would not be fair for some employers to supervise IEMS' students because of the human reasons that were discussed earlier (e.g. competition for jobs). Students also pointed out that now they find it difficult to freely attend IEMS Program because of the employers' negative attitudes. They feared that it would be worse if experiential learning approaches would be implemented. What I heard students say was that publicizing the program would block those people who would want to attend it without the assistance of their organizations. From my experience, what the students were saying is true, some used to get transfers because it was found out that they were attending IEMS programs. Those who were not transferred were not allowed to attend residential classes because they would have not been officially granted the permission to attend the training.

Resources

Human and Material. It is interesting that some students raised a concern regarding resources. For instance, 'M'alerato was concerned about lecturers who would teach the different courses that would cover each student's interest or specialty. For her, introducing this new program meant hiring more lecturers.

Another concern that relates to resources was tuition, that is, if the Credit for Prior Learning Assessment Program was to be implemented, fees would be raised, and students would not be able to pay, so many would not be able to attend. A question would be, how much would students pay? Why would the new program change the tuition structure? These concerns are legitimate and would need to be thought through if Credit for Prior Learning Assessment Program were to be implemented.

According to the students, the program would be fine, but if it had some negative financial implications who would attend? They indicated that they like new approaches because such approaches enable them (students) to explore more strategies of teaching when they are in the field.

From some students' perspective, in order to avoid many problems, it would be good for IEMS not to change the current Program and not introduce new Programs. They were happy the way things were. What they said was a good example of how people fear change. In Sesotho we say, *u se ts'abe moru u e-so kene ka har'a 'ona*. The nearest translation is "don't fear a forest before you go into it because you don't know what is inside that forest."

Employers were on the positive side; almost all who filled out the questionnaire encouraged IEMS to implement Credit for Prior Learning Assessment Program. For

them, such a Program would help the community people, and IEMS would have a chance to assist the students as they are working and learning. Some employers suggested that if a service-learning approach were implemented, there would be a need for IEMS and the relevant organizations to meet and discuss things first. There would also be a need to have reports that would be filed for future reference.

Language

Almost all the students did not see language as a problem to them. Their reaction was not a surprise because it is not easy for someone to admit that she/he has a problem. On the other hand, students might have been saying that their English language fluency should not prevent them from trying new ideas. There should be ways to overcome such a problem. They all thought the idea of artifacts would be wonderful because most said they liked role-plays.

Summary

Most of the barriers discussed in this section related to:

- the structure of the current Certificate Program that would need to be changed if experiential learning approaches would be implemented;
- the resources, both human and material would need to be considered;
- time to introduce the approaches and to apply them; and
- the content that would be taught to all these students with diverse interests, attitude of all the people who would be concerned, especially

the employers and the students. What would be the students' needs?

Would they be catered to in the new Program?

The administrators suggested a number of good ideas to consider if the Credit for Prior Learning Assessment Program would be implemented. For instance, the Program would work if it were a non-formal, and non-credit, and if it were run on a small scale as a mini project or on a trial basis. Almost all the participants' suggestions were to start with service learning to see how it would operate. The idea of implementing the experiential learning approaches, particularly Credit for Prior Learning Assessment, was supported and encouraged, even though there would be some precautions to take. For instance, everybody was aware that this program would require some thorough preparation and planning because it would be a new phenomenon to most people. One point of interest is the fact that one has to consider the content as well because it is as important or more important than the approach, depending on why the students have come to learn. The content issue is more important because some of the interviewees had an impression that the approaches would be taught in isolation. However, the approaches are to help teach the content that is supposed to be taught in the Certificate courses. Their aim is to make the content more practical and relevant to the lives of the people in Lesotho.

What intrigued me was the fact that nobody said anything about the interests of the University except that a needs assessment had to be done to gain support and to know that such a program is needed.

The lecturers said that, the Credit for Prior Learning could be tried, though some thought it would be good as a method of teaching if it is applied as a non-formal,

non-credit approach. Others thought it would be good if it were tried on an experimental basis and evaluated.

Students and employers differed. Some of the students in Certificate Two felt that the Program should not be tried because the number of students to be admitted would be reduced and also it would mean a tuition adjustment. Certificate Ones, because they had not been with the Program for too long, felt that the new Program would be fine for them.

Conclusion and Overview of the Next Chapter

Conclusion is an area that is always difficult to write about. However, I think it is clear that it would be easy to integrate service learning into the IEMS Certificate Program provided that IEMS do a needs assessment to find out what the community, the students and the University want. Credit for Prior Learning Program could be implemented on a trial basis after some issues of content, standards and attitudes are cleared. The Program might be introduced as a non-formal, in-service program, or it could be treated as a teaching method like other teaching methods. A question is, what would be the implications of all these suggestions for IEMS, the employers, IEMS lecturers, and the learners? How would the new Programs work in relation to the current one? What would be the lecturers' role in the new Program?

In Chapter 7, I am exploring the implications if experiential learning approaches were implemented into the Certificate Program.

CHAPTER 7

IMPLICATIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS, SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This study investigated the applicability of experiential learning theory in the context of the Certificate Program of the Institute of Extra Mural Studies of the National University of Lesotho. The issues that prompted this study included a gap between theory and practice in the teaching and learning in the Certificate Program and too much reliance on the lecture method, which is more teacher-centered than learner-centered. In addition, students fail to proceed to the next class or are transferred because either the program does not meet their needs or it does not attract their employers.

The purpose of this study, as indicated in Chapter 1, has been to sample people's opinions regarding the use of experiential learning approaches that put the learner at the center of learning through critical reflection and action and bridge the gap between theory and practice (Dewey, 1938; Brookfield, 1997; Mezirow, 1991). I hoped that from the interviews, people would continue to reflect on the role that they each play in the Certificate Program. I hoped that they would create space to think and talk about experiential learning theory, its principles, and its approaches in the teaching and learning of the Certificate Program. The qualitative case study research approach was used to help participants to reflect and learn from the study at the same time that they responded to the interview questions.

In Chapter 1, in the section entitled "The Significance of the Study," I indicated that experiential learning approaches are appropriate for Lesotho's adult education programs because, from the literature, I have learned that

- Students' prior learning is recognized. In Lesotho, from my experience, there is a lot of local knowledge that can be utilized for developmental and economic purposes. Because this local knowledge is not recognized or accredited, young adults do not value it. Art work, such as weaving using natural resources like grass, is one example of this kind of knowledge.
- Many people cannot afford formal education because it is expensive. Introducing experiential learning approaches, particularly Credit for Prior Learning, opens more possibilities to those people who obtained relevant academic skills in job training but did not have an opportunity to pass the formal school examination. It can also accelerate a student's program and, therefore, cost less.
- Experiential learning approaches can bridge the gap between theory and practice because students discuss the actual experiences that happened in the field; at the same time, they relate their experiences to theory through a problem solving approach (Dewey, 1938; and Brookfield, 1996). The knowledge from the local environment is brought into the university setting so that students can further learn from their experience.
- Experiential learning approaches, especially the Credit for Prior Learning, help to build important life skills such as planning, organization, decision making, self-reflection, research, dialogue, action, independence, group work, socialization and especially writing and

critical thinking skills. Because these skills are built on experiences, they involve emotions, attitudes, and beliefs that learners have.

Chapters 4, 5, and 6 also indicate that almost everyone that I interviewed, in principle, supports the idea of integrating experiential learning approaches or even introducing Credit for Prior Learning into the Certificate in Adult Education Program. Therefore, in this chapter, I start by speculating on the implications of introducing (a) experiential learning approaches, such as service learning and cooperative learning into the current Certificate in Adult Education Program, and (b) Credit for Prior Learning into the Certificate Program. That is, what would the introduction of these approaches mean to all the people who are involved in the Certificate Program? In conclusion, I discuss some recommendations that I suggest; I summarize the proceedings of the study, and then I recommend action for further research on how experiential learning approaches can be implemented.

Implications of Integrating Experiential Learning Approaches into the Current Certificate Program

The discussion at this level is based on what the interviewees said and what I have learned from the literature about barriers that would have to be overcome if experiential learning approaches were introduced; and the issues that would make integration of the approaches into the Certificate Program, particularly service learning, possible.

The Implications Concerning Administrators

In Chapters 4 through 6, the majority of the administrators indicated that approaches like collaborative learning (understood as cooperative learning) and role play should already be part of the learning process. However, it is important that they be reviewed for purposes of clarity to everybody, particularly students. The discussions in this section will be focused on the service learning approach defined earlier because interviewees focused on it more than other approaches. There are several issues that would need to be addressed if service learning were to be integrated into the Certificate Program. Some issues raised by administrators related to the idea of partnerships with other organizations. According to Rue in Jacoby and Associates (1996), partnership between the University and the community or organization concerned is the key to success in service learning.

To be in partnership means that the administrators of IEMS would need to identify the organizations that they would work with. The expectations of both parties would have to be clear from the beginning for each group to know its roles. For instance, what resources would be available on both sides to avoid duplication, what type of support services would be needed, and who would provide what? It would also be important to know the internal politics of some of the organizations and the level of commitment to service learning or even adult education programs in general. Freire's (1993) dialogue technique as discussed in Chapter 2 could also be used to involve people in meaningful discussions that would lead to critical reflection and action. However, Shor (1992) makes the reader aware that Freire's critical dialogue "needs a teacher who is dialogical, who is alert and fast in mind and speech to structure the

discussion so that people take turns and respond to each other." He further says that critical dialogue is a skill that people have to intentionally and freely develop (p. 114). In my experience of working in administration, there were some organizations that had negative attitudes towards IEMS Adult Education Programs. Partnerships require mutual understanding, equal interest, and support.

Rue (1996) mentions two important issues that relate to partnership. These are planning and coordination (p. 250). Every project needs thorough planning to be successful and sustainable. In planning to work in partnership with other organizations IEMS administrators would have to consider several things such as

Integration. The obvious strategy for me would be to build the service learning approach into the curriculum. That is, a written objective in the curriculum would focus on service learning. Such a move would require curriculum review and approval by the appropriate University committees because it will affect the assessment practice that is currently used. Assessment is discussed later in this chapter.

How would the service learning approach be integrated into the existing curriculum? Would it be approached through direct placement in which students would spend so many months in the field under supervision, or would students be given specific assignments? Rubin in Jacoby and Associates (1996, p. 297) discusses ways of institutionalizing service learning. I believe that IEMS administrators, students and the community that is served would need to hold a joint series of meetings to discuss how best they could integrate service learning into the Certificate Program.

Admission. There would be a need to review the present admissions criteria. For instance, it would be important to admit students who would be interested and

motivated to be involved in service learning approaches. However, from the interview sessions I learned that one problem would be placement for those students who would not be working or who would not be granted permission to attend IEMS Programs by their organizations.

Why would an organization not grant an employee permission to study when such employees are still working? This question was not part of the study; however, from my experience of working in the Adult Education Division as an administrator, I know that sometimes non-governmental or governmental organizations like the Lesotho Red Cross or the Ministry of Agriculture pay for a certain group of employees who work at their organizations to attend IEMS programs. Those who apply on their own sometimes encounter problems if they have to miss work in order to go to school. Since the structure of the Certificate Program has changed, the two-week residential requirement has been abolished. Sending many people to IEMS programs may be no longer a problem because some people only wanted permission to attend, not tuition support.¹ That is, some people paid for their tuition through other funding sources.

Other factors that might prevent people from getting permission to attend IEMS Certificate Program could be cheap labor or competition for work. For instance, some employers may prefer to hire under qualified people because they (under qualified) are paid low wages. Again, because of lack of work opportunities, competition for work is very high and sometimes some employers may choose not to work with people who will need to be assigned lighter work responsibilities because they are part-time students.

¹Residential period is explained in Chapter 1.

Assessment and Supervision. Assessment and supervision are factors that will also need to be planned by administrators before the approach is introduced. That is, it will be important to know how service learning projects will be assessed. How much course work would be required for a student to pass in an integrated service learning program? How would students present their projects bearing in mind the language problem? That is, most of the interviewees indicated that some students might not be able to write intensively because their English communication skills are not up to University standards. In Chapter 6, some alternative ways of presentation were suggested, but other participants thought that introducing alternative ways of assessment would need a lot of explanation and planning.

In Chapter 3, the reader learned that there are thirty students in each class of the Certificate program. Experiential learning approaches are based on individual supervision and one- on -one guidance. Therefore, supervising thirty students would be difficult for IEMS' Adult Education Division because six teachers teach at the Certificate Program, and three of them are part-time teachers. This means that the IEMS administration would need to ask for assistance from the employers. That is, external supervisors would be needed to work with the IEMS lecturers in assessing the students. However, some administrators and some students felt that external supervision might not be a good idea because of the reasons already discussed in Chapter 6. That is, external supervisors may not have academic expertise in supervision of students' individual service learning projects and in making the educational connections for students, or they may want to be paid. Thorough planning might help to clear up some of the misunderstandings that might be experienced later in the program by raising the

questions in advance. Some of the critical pedagogy approaches like transformation, critical reflection, and dialogue could be tried to mobilize people's thinking about supervision. For instance, Mezirow's (1995) meaning making is a way of questioning one's beliefs, attitudes, and assumptions in order to learn from them.

From the classroom perspective, students can be trained to do individual and group assessment. For instance, what I observed at the UWW was that students were asked to give themselves a grade and write a rationale for their decision. I interviewed their instructor to find out if her grades differed from what a student would give herself/himself and the response I got was that often the grades she assigned students were not far from what students suggested. The students, too, liked to assess themselves. Group assessment was also common in the UWW classes. Each student read her/his essay, other students listened attentively and gave constructive feedback afterwards. Furthermore, the Certificate students in Adult Education will have to be introduced to the idea first. From observing their classes, (Certificate students in Lesotho) the method they used was exchanging scripts and marking another student's work based on the answers that came from the teacher. Kolb's learning model as discussed in Chapter 2 could be used to help students identify the problem, reflect on it critically, conceptualize it, and experiment with it until they reach a solution. Both teachers and students would need to learn the process in order to apply it well. For instance, students could be helped to reflect on assessment and its importance in a learning institution like IEMS or how to use peer feedback effectively.

University Bureaucracy. One barrier mentioned by some administrators was the University bureaucracy. University policies may not be flexible enough to allow for

innovations like outside supervisors or less formal assessments like oral examination presentations. Integrating the service learning approach would mean reviewing the IEMS' mission statement with the purpose of examining or even evaluating its objectives and recommending new ways of assessment. As I indicated in Chapter 1, not many Basotho people in the rural areas seem to benefit from the University services. The existing part time IEMS adult education programs seem to reproduce the gap that exists between the educated and the less educated because formal qualifications are the main basis for admission.

Coordination. The Division of Adult Education already has internal coordinators for each program. The Certificate Program coordinator would need to be trained in experiential learning approaches so that he/she would be able to plan and organize the Program well. The expectation for such a person would be to plan and facilitate the training of other lecturers and hold orientation courses for the students and other people who play a role in the program. It would be necessary for all the stakeholders in the Certificate Program, including students, to meet and decide on the role of the coordinator to make sure that everybody supports the program.

Library Facilities. Library facilities would also need to be considered because, at the moment, most libraries are located in Maseru, and that makes it difficult for students who live outside the town of Maseru to use library facilities. A practice has been to provide mobile library services. That is, an assistant librarian at IEMS takes books to IEMS Regional Centers that had weekend teaching programs.²

²The practice could be expanded to facilitate experiential learning programs.

Attitudes. Attitudes, particularly negative attitudes of all the people who will be involved with the new program, can be one block to introducing service learning and even the Credit for Prior Learning. It would be necessary for administrators to be able to distinguish between barriers that are based on attitudes and those that are based on the structure of the program. According to Rogers (1996), it is necessary to locate the cause of negative attitudes and to avoid introducing a lot of new ideas at a time because they can overwhelm students.

The Implications for the Lecturers

What would it mean for the lecturers if approaches like service learning were integrated into the Certificate Program? This would be an issue that would need to be thoroughly discussed during the lecturers' orientation because the introduction of experiential learning approaches would mean that their teaching roles would need to change or become more flexible. They would have to review the meaning of facilitation and how it is put into practice. For instance, Brookfield (1995) asserts, "in helping adults learn how to learn, facilitators develop learner's meta learning skills of awareness and self-reflection rather than skills of content transformation" (p. 206).

The lecturers would also need to sharpen their self-reflection skills so that they are able to assess their day-to-day planning and teaching. It would be important for them to reflect on the relevancy of the content to the learners. They would need to help learners to connect and practice what they learn in the classroom with day-to-day activities.

Time Management. The reader will remember that critical reflective thinking according to Brookfield (1996), Mezirow (1995), and Freire (1993) is very complex and demands a lot of understanding and commitment. The concern is that the lecturers in the Certificate Program are part-time lecturers who are hired elsewhere on a full time basis. Lecturers who are hired for the Certificate Program might have to reconsider whether they could genuinely manage to handle two jobs that are equally demanding. Another possibility could be for IEMS to consider hiring more assistant lecturers to help with supervision.

Most of the lecturers complained that there would not be enough time to introduce experiential learning approaches. Such a concern would also mean that time management becomes a topic for discussion during the orientation workshops. For instance, how can lecturers manage their time in the classroom? How can learners be made aware of using time consciously and effectively? What planning strategies would need to be encouraged that would enable lecturers to save time? Would the use of typed lecture notes instead of lecture notes that are written on the chalkboard or dictated to students help in managing time? Or would the use of other teaching devices like handouts, newsprints, slide shows, and others help in managing time?

Commitment. Commitment is related to time management. The lecturers would need to make an additional time commitment for training workshops and orientation meetings because such workshops and meetings are meant to help programs run smoothly. For instance, issues that would need to be discussed at such workshops would include supervision procedures, modes of giving feedback to the students and the coordinator, types of projects that would be educational and experiential, and others.

Currently, the Division is already supervising projects for the Diploma Program, and I believe that some of the Division's experiences in running the Diploma projects would need to be used as learning resources by the lecturers. That is, what the Division does to supervise Diploma level students might need to be adapted to facilitate the Certificate service learning projects.

The Implications for the Students and their Employers

In experiential learning approaches everybody is a learner and a teacher. Students would need to understand that they are not expected to totally depend on the teacher because they are learning through an experiential mode that requires them to be more active. They would need to choose projects which would be meaningful to them. From the literature review on adult education and from my experience, people do well when they study what interests them. Mezirow (1995) encourages meaning making strategies to help students learn from concrete experiences. One question that might need to be considered would be: how can lecturers guide students in identifying those experiences that they learned from because, as already mentioned earlier, experiences are personal, emotional, sensitive, sometimes private, and not clearly identifiable? This means that students and lecturers will have to be aware of the tensions involved and treat experiences with great caution.

Commitment. Commitment to the demands of the new approach is also an issue that would need to be discussed among the learners, the IEMS coordinator, lecturers, and the employers because, without it, the approach may not succeed. That is, students would need to re-organize their time to fit their service learning projects into their usual

busy schedule. The employers, too, would need to support the learners by giving them fewer work responsibilities/assignments and by providing advice where they could. Those workers who would be taking supervisory roles would also need to be committed to their assignments.

Training. Training in critical self-reflection and conflict resolution techniques would be necessary for the learners as well as their external supervisors. Both skills will be essential for the success of the service learning because I believe that when one is learning in the field, it is not the same as when one is learning within the four walls of the school building. Political, economic, societal, or moral pressures might hinder learning progress. It would be important for everybody to acquire the necessary skills. For example, an external supervisor in the field might not support the idea of service learning, but agree to help a student for personal reasons or because she/he was asked by his/her boss to supervise for political or social reasons. For instance, students might already be familiar with the tensions in their organizations; they might even know who would support them and who might not. Students would need to be critical and alert to activities that might destruct their learning progress.

On the same note, employers or external supervisors would need to know the service learning program's objectives so that they become aware of what they are expected to do. Sometimes, in my teaching experience, I have seen that if the external supervisor is not clear about what she/he has to do, learning can turn into a disaster.

Implications of Introducing the Credit for Prior Learning Program to the Certificate in Adult Education Program

The question in this section is, what would it mean to administrators, the lecturers, students, and their employers if a Credit for Prior Learning Program were introduced to the Certificate Program? What issues would need the most attention? The responses of the administrators, the lecturers, and the students as well as their employers will be discussed at the same time to avoid repetition because a lot of similar issues were raised as when service learning was discussed. I will focus on the structure of the present program, admission criteria and costs, course content and assessment, and needs or requirements for the key people in the program (the students, the University, and the employers).

Implications Regarding the Structure of the Program

If a Credit for Prior Learning program were introduced at the Certificate level, the structure of the present Certificate Program would have to change. Credit for Prior Learning, as the reader will recall, means giving college credit for experiential learning, that is, assessing what a student learned based on his or her experience before coming to College. For instance, if a student was involved in a chicken-rearing project, she engaged in activities like feeding the chickens. What is important is what she learned. Perhaps she learned that chickens lay eggs during the day and that to cause them to lay eggs during the night, you have to light their room. Moreover, she learned how to take care of the chickens in order to gain profit. That is, she learned when to feed them, what and how much to feed them, after how many weeks she changed the food, and when

were the chickens ready to be sold if they were chickens for meat. She learned how to account for the stock that she had, and how to manage finances. This learning is achieved through experience and it is understood through continuous reflection with the purpose of making meaning from it. Every step gets better every time it is practiced. That is, the person who is rearing chickens gets better in taking care of them every time she starts a new brood because, experientially, she learns from her previous mistakes or achievements.

As a result, the emphasis in a Credit for Prior Learning would be to encourage students to critically reflect on their prior learning experiences. That is, students would need to be empowered to critically assess their past experiences in order to learn more from them and to continue learning from their assumptions. The present Certificate program's course description (appendix A) is not as explicit as it should be as far as experience is concerned.

Other factors that would require decisions would be the appropriate length of time that students would take in such a program and what variables would be used to help to decide the duration of the program. The length of time that students take before they can complete the Certificate and other IEMS adult education programs is an issue because students take a long time before they can enroll into a degree program. That is, there are two years in Certificate, two years in Diploma, and another four years in junior degree. I believe that the amount of work that students would do through experiential learning approaches would require a reduced length of time because students would be waived from taking some courses. That is, a student's portfolio can be evaluated with the purpose of waiving such a student from a course that he/she wrote about. Perhaps

the University Without Walls (UWW) of the University of Massachusetts program model, as discussed in Chapter 2 can be replicated into the Certificate Program.

Implications for Admissions Criteria and Costs

The criteria for admissions would need to be decided, too. There are already working admissions criteria, which could be reviewed and be adapted to fit the new program. However, the first step would be to decide whether to integrate experiential learning into the curriculum or whether it would be a program on its own. Again, the University Without Walls' or other similar programs' admissions criteria could be adapted to fit Lesotho's case. Most of all, such criteria should meet the needs of those who are served more than what the University wants, or at least balance the needs of all the people who benefit from it. The implication is that the IEMS administration will have to do a lot of advertising and meetings in the Regional Centers in order to explain the objectives of the program to people.

Costs would also need to be discussed. It is the policy of the National University of Lesotho that IEMS programs be self-financing. In most cases IEMS programs depend on students' tuition. However, the Credit for Prior Learning Program would not meet the policy's requirements at the beginning because fewer students could be admitted. This is so because it would not be easy to supervise many projects at a time. From observing the UWW "Writing about Experience" class, I noticed that there were one-on-one tutorials between students and their instructors over and above the large and small group meetings. However, if the UWW model is followed, the students who write a portfolio pay a certain fee based on how many credits they have. For instance, a student

whose credits range between 3-15 pays US \$400.00, for 15-33 credits she pays US \$800.00, and for 34 credits plus, she pays US \$1200. The IEMS administration, in collaboration with the University of Lesotho's Bursar's Office, and Program Development office will need to decide how much each student should pay bearing in mind that their Program is at a Certificate level and not a junior degree like that of the UWW. They will also need to consider Lesotho's economic status as they re-evaluate the charges because students raised a concern in Chapter 6 that a new program might imply raising tuition fees.

In order to address the issue of costs, proposals could be submitted to key international agencies like Kellogg Foundation, DVV, (Deutscher Volkshochschul Verband German Adult Education Association), or others that specialize in community rural development. I believe that the Credit for Prior Learning Program can be supported because its purpose is to strengthen and empower people who work for the community, with the community, and in the community. For instance, individual learners improve their skills on the job by reflecting on what they learned from their work experience and how they can continue to learn from it. The retention level of students is maintained since they enjoy what they are learning. They bring change to themselves, the organizations that they work for, and the people around them through further sharing of experiences.

Distance learning could be another way of fighting costs. That is, parts of the program could be offered through distance education. Some lecturers indicated that distance learning is expensive; however, I believe it might not be that expensive since the Division of Adult Education is already running some distance education programs.

For instance, radio programs can be used as before to broadcast some of the messages, like when the groups should meet with the coordinator or tutor. Or guided video tapes can be used at the Regional centers to help shorten the distance of the instructor from the learners. That is, a tutor can assigned a work of facilitating the discussions after viewing the tapes with the students.

Some of the members of staff and support staff in Adult Education Division are already familiar with how distance education programs run; therefore, there will be no need to spent money on training the trainers and the support staff. IEMS credit programs Divisions (Business Management and Development and Adult Education) routinely visit the Regional Centers on weekends. This means that there would be no money spent on additional transportation if the Credit for Prior Learning Program is run through distance education. Such an approach would also further promote the decentralization of University services and promote collaboration between IEMS Divisions. Students would be learning within their own regions and sharing experiences based on their own environments because environment plays a big role in experiential learning.

Implications for the Course Content and Assessment

As I indicated earlier, the Credit for Prior Learning appeared to be a new phenomenon to most of the people interviewed. As a result, a review of the current course content would be a necessity. For instance, the University Without Walls Program (UWW) courses could be adapted to meet the needs of Basotho people. (UWW's course descriptions are attached as Appendix F).

Assessment would need to be considered in the Credit for Prior Learning Project. For instance, how many credits would be given for what activity? Would students be asked to write extensively? Or might the writing be supplemented with some demonstrations or artifacts as discussed earlier? In Chapter 6, under barriers, some administrators and even lecturers felt that the University structure is not flexible enough to accommodate the use of artifacts. Yet they also felt that students might not be in a position to write readable papers because of the English language barrier. Therefore, the implication is that there would have to be considerable discussion and debate over the issue of assessment. How could students be assisted to present their projects differently? I believe that English language, as much as it is an international language, should not prevent adult learners from earning relevant University Certificates. As it was mentioned in Chapter 6 that stories and creative drama can be used to overcome the problem of written language, Adams and Hamm (1990) also support that creative drama is a very good and active method of learning because it provides "self-realization in unified learning experiences, it offers firsthand experiences in democratic behavior, it provides functional learning which is related to life, and it contributes to comprehensive learning" (p. 77).

As one of the administrators ('M'athabo) indicated in Chapter 5, abolishing the English language requirement would kill the Certificate Program because the Program would not prepare a person who could work globally. In support of what 'M'athabo said, there is an English course (AEC 100-6) for Certificate One students. However from observing this class, there were too many students (30+) and it was difficult for one teacher to give more written work.

The UWW Program does not very well fit the Certificate in Adult Education Program because the majority of the students spoke English as their first language. However, the teaching approaches helped even those who did not have English as a first language to be involved in the writing process. One method that was very strong was peer feedback. Each student read his or her own writing in class and others critically listened with the purpose of giving constructive feedback.

Ethical issues, attitudes, and beliefs would play a role in assessment. For instance, one of the advantages of learning from experience is that local knowledge and how people live in the community are brought into the academic learning environment. What would it mean to everyone to discuss local knowledge in the academic setting? How would the learners and their instructors treat critical issues that might be delicate and political like religion and traditional marriage? How would learners' experiences be protected or given the sensitivity they deserve? How would attitudes, beliefs, and assumptions of everyone in the program be addressed? In my experience, issues of harassment at work because of status, abuse of power, corruption, rape, drug abuse and many more are experiences that many students have had at work, but it might be life threatening to write about them.

However, Mezirow's (1991) model might be applied to help people to psychologically reflect on what happened to them. An easier strategy would be to encourage people to start with unread written journals where they do free writing about their stories (Brookfield, 1996). In 1998, I co-taught an undergraduate course, International Education, Leadership Development in Community Education, to a

multicultural group of students. The core of the course focused on Refugee and Immigrants in the United States.

Some of the issues discussed were very sensitive because the majority of the students that enrolled in this course were the descendants of refugees and immigrants families. We (myself and the person I taught with) asked the learners to write journals about their experiences after we shared some refugees and immigrants experiences from literature. We collected the journals once a month in order to read them and sometimes we selected some interesting issues and shared those with the larger group for further thought and discussions. Sometimes the students did skits in the class about some of the problems that refugees and immigrants encountered when they first came to America. The skits were followed by further discussions and reflections. By the end of the class, some students said they felt more comfortable with their identities.

I believe that allowing the Certificate students in Lesotho to discuss their stories in an academic setting will enhance their way of solving problems individually and or collectively and they will have a chance to learn some more as other students question or critique them. They will also have a space to share how they do traditional counseling because, from my experience as a Mosotho person, there were some good ways of counseling people if they had had some problems. For instance, the family and close family friends played a larger role in such cases.

Implications for Needs/Requirements

Academic writing requires students to cite from books to support their arguments or their ideas. Some of the students mentioned citing as an issue. Sometimes

what they write about at IEMS is what they know, yet they are expected to provide citations from books. That is, they write about local knowledge that they receive from their communities through local ways of knowing. Some of the concerns, therefore, are: How would the students cite such knowledge when it is not written anywhere? What would it mean for their lecturers to mark such a paper? People would need to understand that experiential learning is about sharing personal stories with the purpose of learning from them. Autobiographies (Brookfield, 1996) are a good way of learning experientially. What I observed at the UWW was that students supported their stories by comparing them with what has been researched from the literature. Linking their experience with theory made their stories more valid. I believe such issues would need to be thought of in the planning process, and I hope that the questions serve to help people critically examine what would happen, not scare people from trying experiential learning approaches.

Implications for an Experimental or Non-credit Non-formal Program

A possible way of implementing a Credit for Prior Learning program suggested by some of the administrators and the lecturers was to start the Credit for Prior Learning program on an experimental basis to see if it could work. The second idea was that it could be established as a non-formal program. There are consequences for both suggestions. If the former approach was considered, it would necessitate building an evaluation component into the design. That is, the program would need to have an on-going evaluation or summative evaluation that would be done by an outside person. Another possibility could be to conduct a participatory evaluation that would include

students, lecturers, employers, and administrators. Anything participatory benefits a lot of people because learning takes place simultaneously with the process of evaluation. It also potentially builds support for the program.

If the latter approach were considered, it would be important to involve students as the main beneficiaries and to find out if such an approach would meet their needs. For instance, people continue to improve their qualifications for the purpose of getting better pay. If the program was non-credited, but certificated, a question would be whether any Ministry would recognize such a certificate. Sometimes history repeats itself. In the 1980s, some primary teachers were given training under the Basic And Non-Formal Systems known as the BANFES Project. This project was funded by USAID, and it had very good courses that trained teachers in various teaching and classroom management skills. However, it took some years of hot debate before the certificates of those teachers who participated in the training were evaluated for remuneration. People don't only want paper recognition; they want to be paid for their services.

Faculty involvement and training would be necessary if the Program were introduced. From the literature review and the case study of the University Without Walls program that I conducted, I have learned that implementing experiential learning approaches takes a lot of responsibility and commitment on the part of the University administration and, more importantly, on the part of the faculty members who would be playing a larger role, acting as supervisors, coordinators, advisors, teachers, mentors and evaluators.

Summary, Recommendations and Conclusion

Summary

To summarize, I started my journey by investigating experiential learning theory as discussed by Dewey (1938). Qualitative research helped to explore people's opinions regarding experiential learning and its underlying principles such as democracy, freedom, and equality in the classroom.

The modern and postmodern writers who build on what Dewey started also contributed in the shaping of the study. These include Piaget's (1974) constructivist theory, based on how people construct knowledge by using experience and mental abilities from the environment that surrounds them. Knowles (1984) and Lindeman (1951) in Brookfield (1987) who confirm what Dewey said about experience being the basis and resource for an adult learner in the learning situation. Brookfield (1996) also builds on the idea that adult educators need to help adult learners to critically reflect on their learning experiences in the classroom with the purpose of learning from them. Mezirow (1995), like Brookfield, believes in perspective transformation, that is, making meaning from one's experiences in order to transform or change attitudes, beliefs, and perspectives about the world. Freire (1993) believes that adult educators need to be aware of the importance of praxis and dialogue in order to bring about social change and justice to the life of an adult learner. Finally, Belenky et al. (1986) believe that people, particularly women, learn socially from experience and says that adult educators should be aware of different ways of constructing knowledge based on experience.

From the interviews I conducted, the observations I made, and the focus group I facilitated, I learned that experience is a global way of learning; however, the concept of experiential learning as used by Dewey and his followers in higher education was new to most people that were interviewed. For instance, the meanings that Dewey gives to the concepts of democracy, freedom, and equality are different from the meanings Basotho people give to these concepts because, to them, authority and responsibility are attached to the meanings. Most of the people who were interviewed agreed that learning from experience should be basically how adults learn, and that experiential approaches can build a bridge between theory and practice because learners bring local knowledge or day-to-day knowledge of how they live into the learning environment.

Introducing experiential learning approaches like service learning, cooperative learning as discussed in the literature, or collaborative learning, and Credit for Prior Learning would have the following implications:

- Because the experiential learning approaches and the Credit for Prior Learning would be new phenomena at the University level, people's opinions about these approaches would need to be surveyed through a needs assessment process.
- The curriculum would need to be revised to include experiential learning approaches and a Credit for Prior Learning program.
- Other related issues needing closer examination would be the structure of the Certificate Program, its admission criteria, and content and assessment in relation to the needs of the key stakeholders in the program, particularly the students.

- Attitudes of some of the University administrators, the lecturers, and the employers regarding academic standards of students in the Certificate in adult education Program would need to change. That is, it is important to trust and believe that the students can perform well in the experiential learning approaches or the Credit for Prior Learning program.

Recommendations

In making recommendations, I am aware that experiential learning theory was discussed for the first time in the Certificate in Adult Education Program. Nevertheless, the approaches make learning relevant and a joy to both the learner and the instructor; as a result, they lead to personal growth. The experiential learning principles like experience, democracy, freedom and equality, particularly the latter three, may not mean the same thing to everybody, but they are essential in promoting experiential learning approaches in the classroom. I, therefore, recommend that if the principles (experience, democracy, freedom, and equality) are to be meaningfully integrated into the Certificate Program, both students, teachers, administrators and employers need to have open discussions and dialogue (Freire, 1993) about what the principles mean in the learning and teaching environment. That is, dialogue is an "encounter between men, mediated by the world in order to name the world" (p. 69). That is, dialogue involves everybody in discussion with the purpose of "re-making or re-creating" the world and will be made with love for mankind, humility to recognize others equally, and faith in humankind. That is, educators need to have faith that people have power, but be critically aware that that power can be misused.

From the interviews, people were clear that freedom in the classroom should be freedom with authority, which is what Freire in Mayo (1999) and Shor (1992) are saying, Authority is needed for the students' freedom. That is, the teacher knows how far the students should be free because he/she has prepared the lesson and he/she knows how much content the students need to learn in order to be knowledgeable. For Freire, authority is different from authoritarianism.

The respondents understood cooperative learning to mean group work, which is different from how Bennet (1977), Wilson (1978), Davidson and Worsham (1992), and Adams and Hamm (1990) explain it. For the respondents, cooperative learning means doing group work in order to achieve a common goal. Their explanation is similar to how Bruffee (1999) and others explain collaborative learning. In a cooperative work experience setting, according to Bennet and others, students have full time jobs and study on a part-time basis. The difference between cooperative education and service learning as they are practiced in the West is that in the latter approach, students volunteer their time. The purpose for service learning was to enable students to learn more about their communities and suggest ways of improving them. From the literature review and the discussions that I had with my professors, service learning was also introduced to help bridge a gap that existed between the individual citizens in America and community life. That is, the purpose is to neutralize the individualistic way of living that exists among people by educating American youth about community life. From the discussions, I intuitively want to conclude that the responds are more familiar with collaborative learning approach, however, the terminology that is used needs to be clarified through research work.

Collaborative learning was also not given much time during the interviews, but it is also an experiential approach that contributes to learning because it develops negotiation, interaction, and critical thinking skills (Dillenbourg, 1999). Sometimes self-directed learning is also developed because learners independently initiate collaborative learning meetings. They gain more experience in self-reflection, writing journals, peer feedback, negotiation skills, problem-solving skills, and more. They enjoy learning from their experiences and how to work democratically and equally in order to achieve a common goal.

When a new concept is introduced, it is always wise to introduce it in small parts to avoid confusion, but I find myself in a dilemma regarding experiential learning approaches, such as cooperative learning, service learning, and collaborative learning. From the interviews and from my own experience of working as an administrator and adult instructor at IEMS, the approaches are already familiar to instructors, but they are not used as learning approaches at the Certificate level. For instance, students do a lot of service work. They go to school part-time and work full-time jobs; however, what they do in the field is never part of the curriculum. As a result, the work that students do in the field is probably contributing to their learning, but is not made explicit. Because of lack of recognition of what is happening at their work places, students don't credit their experiences that they gain from work places. Again, when the majority of the participants were interviewed, they seemed to be familiar with attachment programs or internships more than service learning.

I, therefore, recommend that cooperative learning as defined by Bennet (1977), collaborative learning, service learning, role-plays, and drama be integrated into the

teaching and learning of the Certificate Program as basic learning methods. Integrating these approaches into the learning process will enable both the instructors and the students to gain more from the classroom interactions; they will enhance the students' participation in designing what to learn and how to learn it. They will gradually assist learners to improve their communication skills (reading, writing, listening and speaking) and to understand other concepts that relate to experiential learning approaches in a broader sense. All the approaches build a strong sense of sharing among groups. They build team spirit, learning through socialization (Brookfield, 1996; Belenky et al., 1986), active participation, and enhancing peer evaluation.

As I indicated above, my rationale is based on the fact that the case of the Certificate in Adult Education Program is different from that of the usual program found in the University of Massachusetts. The majority of the students are already doing service work or cooperative work experience, but their services are not academically recognized. The majority of the learners form collaborative networks with their peers at work without the instructor's assistance, but their efforts are not academically supervised and credited. For instance, during the focus group interviews, some Year One students wanted to leave the discussions because they had organized a group discussion meeting with some colleagues in their region.

Both cooperative experience education and service learning can work for the Certificate in Adult Education because both approaches provide service to the community and an educational component to the students. To avoid confusion of terms, I suggest that the new program be called " Experienced-based Certificate in Adult Education." Like Lenepa indicated during the interviews, I recommend that Certificate

students do experienced-based activities during the second year of the study so that their assessment is based on projects or portfolio writing. I also recommend that the contact hours for class be reduced to once a month to give students time to write the portfolios and to meet with their peers. If hours of contact are reduced, tutors will have time to visit the students at work to supervise their learning if need arises. Tutors will also have time to meet with the employers and learn the problems or successes that organizations have through the Certificate Program. Students will also save time and money in travel expenses to IEMS. I believe that an experienced-based program will minimize the gap that exists between the theory that is taught in the classroom and practice that is learned in the field.

I recommend that assessment be based on writing projects and portfolios because students will be writing about real life issues supported by literature reviews. What students will write about will improve their performance at work and in life because they will have already gained a lot of information regarding the topic about which they will write. The topic will directly relate to their work problems or their needs in life. In the end, the students will achieve greater satisfaction, self-esteem and confidence than if they had participated in a traditional program. Their research skills and communication skills will be enhanced as well.

The Credit for Prior Learning should be piloted on an experimental basis as the people interviewed have suggested. However, an experienced-based learning program should precede the Credit for Prior Learning program.

Conclusion and Directions for Further Research

I believe that experiential learning approaches are among the best approaches to learning for an adult learner in a developing country like Lesotho. These approaches would enable Basotho people to learn from their own cultures, from their own ways of doing things and they could compare and maybe adapt approaches used in other countries. The approaches bring a variety of hands-on activities into the classroom and a critical reflection component that puts the learner at the center of learning. It would, therefore, mean that more studies of this nature would need to be carried out with the purpose of learning how experiential learning approaches have helped to build a bridge between theory and practice in other adult education learning institutions in Africa, particularly in the Southern Region of Africa.

My recommendation is to introduce experience-based certificate in Adult Education Program that will benefit both the learners, the community, and the University. However, I am aware that from the case study and the literature review there are many interesting themes and issues that I have learned that may need consideration for further research by other researchers in Adult Education or Higher Education :

- The democracy and freedom that was discussed in the study need a follow up study because people who were interviewed were clear about what they meant by "democracy with authority." But what does democracy with authority in Lesotho mean? Is Freire's idea that " the restrictive structures of society often prevent the mass of people from making free choices so that the social structure often inhibits the development of the person" (Jarvis, 1987, p. 26), playing a role in this

case? I would recommend a qualitative approach in order to find out how cultural expectations impact people's articulation of the concept of "democracy with authority" in the teaching and learning of students who enroll in the Certificate in adult education programs of IEMS.

- Furthermore, Freire (1993), like Mezirow (1991), especially Mezirow, believe that education is expected to create awareness and transformation among people and within. Freire believes that all people should be involved in making important decisions like curriculum design in the classroom. According to him, education should help the learner to put "knowledge into practice" and that the combination of reflection and action leads to "praxis" (Jarvis, 1987, p. 267). An appropriate study would be on how to integrate Freire's ideas into a formal classroom like the Certificate in Adult Education Program. The problem in this case study, among others, was that students are taught a lot of theory and less practice. From my experience of working in the Adult Education Division, Freire's ideas are taught, but how do students use them in their literacy classes or any community work that they do? That is, how is "praxis" used by both the students and the lecturers in order for learners to learn from "it" through their experiences?
- From the literature review, I learned that not all experience is educative (Dewey, 1993). In order for experience to be educative, and to make meaning to the one who is learning from it, it has to be worked upon through critical reflection (Brookfield, 1995; Mezirow, 1998). Reflective

thinking and transformation were not treated in this case study, but they play an important role in experiential learning theory. Therefore, I recommend research on Basotho's perspectives on critical pedagogy in the teaching and learning of adult learners.

- This case study was about teaching and learning in the Certificate in Adult Education Program of IEMS. There are two concerns that need attention: The first is that before I went to collect data I had a hunch that the main method of teaching is the lecture method, the second issue is that during the interviews and class observation, I learned that lecturers call themselves facilitators. I therefore, recommend an action research study on how IEMS' lecturers engage students in the process of teaching and learning.
- Experiential learning approaches, particularly service learning and cooperative learning as practiced in the West need to be further examined so that they could represent what the Basotho people want and value most. An inquiry to find out what would be considered as educative from work experience and how to validate what is learned from work so that students benefit from it would be appropriate. Such an inquiry is necessary because the majority of the students who enroll in the Certificate in Adult Education Program are already involved in their communities as workers or as community members. As community members, they give service in different ways.

- Credit for Prior Learning, too, would need a follow-up study to explore effective implementation strategies that would be sustainable and would benefit the larger Basotho community. Some of the related issues that would need attention would include content and the process of validating Credit for Prior Learning in the context of Lesotho. For instance, what would be considered as prior experience that would deserve a University credit? How would knowledge that is acquired through experience be validated and documented so that it can be used in an academic institution like IEMS?
- This case study also revealed that the Certificate in Adult Education Program of IEMS attracts more women than men. However, this study did not address gender issues. A study that would address some of the following questions would be recommended: Are students, particularly women, represented in the curriculum design? How does the Certificate in Adult Education Program select teaching and learning methods for students, particularly women, knowing that their learning may be affected by the multiple roles that they have (Tong, 1998)? That is, which are their ways of knowing and learning? How are students, particularly women, helped to empower themselves to gain self-confidence in communication and research skills?

Finally, as I indicated, IEMS is already running distance education programs; a further evaluative study can be conducted with the purpose of learning from such programs before a new one is introduced. Or, other distance education institutions in the

Southern Region can also be studied with the purpose of learning from their success stories regarding distance education.

APPENDIX A

CERTIFICATE IN ADULT EDUCATION COURSE OUTLINE

NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF LESOTHO
INSTITUTE OF EXTRA MURAL STUDIES

Adult Education Division

Certificate in Adult Education Course Outline

Certificate One

AEC 100-6: COMMUNICATION SKILLS 1

The course is designed to meet the needs of adult educators who require comprehensive basic skills in communication to effectively initiate development changes in the society. The content is fashioned to help the adult educator overcome problems in communication and to cultivate a sense of confidence in his/her oral and written presentation. The topics to be covered are among others: the sentence, tense and progressives, modal verbs and conditionals, agreement and the use of articles; prepositions and prepositional expressions, listening, speaking and reading skills; note taking and outlining and punctuation, spelling, quoting, paragraphing and referencing.

AEC 120-6: LEARNING AND TEACHING IN ADULT EDUCATION

Learning, although an invisible activity, is a lifelong phenomenon. Therefore, this course is designed to introduce future adult educators and the agents of change in development process, to the concepts of teaching and learning in adult education programs in contrast to the process in the formal school system. Such concepts as types of learning, teaching process, characteristics of learners and needs of adult learners will be covered. Learning resources to achieve skills development and designing teaching and learning programs for effective performance will be covered. Learners will also be

taught how to organize any course program, to develop curriculum for specific learning activity, formulate learning objectives and evaluate learning and teaching processes in any adult education program.

AEC 130-6: PRINCIPLES OF ADULT EDUCATION

This is a basic course designed to be a foundation to the study of adult education. It aims to introduce students to the beliefs and principles on adult education. It will also cover the scope and the objectives of adult education. The course will further explore the difference between adult education and other forms of education. To this effect, it will take students through the pillar concepts such as formal adult education, non-formal education, lifelong education, continuing education and adult learner. The role of adult education in community education and community development will also be examined.

Certificate Two

AEC 200-6: ORGANIZATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

This course will introduce students to theories and approaches to community organization and program planning for development. It will survey the basic concepts of needs determination with a special focus on individual, institutional, community and societal needs. Additionally, the course will equip skills necessary for the practical translation of development needs into specific goals and objectives. Covered will also be processes that are involved in the identification and accessing of resources (human

and material) needed to meet the needs. The course will be concluded by exploring at an introductory level, some of the key concepts and broad principles of program administration, planning, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and report writing.

AEC 220-6: ADULT EDUCATION PRACTICE IN LESOTHO

This course is designed to introduce students to concepts and the overall general operation of adult education in Lesotho. The students' knowledge and understanding of the adult education practice in Lesotho will be enhanced by being exposed to the adult education providing agencies as well as mechanisms used in the practice. The course will deal with kinds of programs operated by Government Ministries as well as Non-governmental organizations, which are practicing adult education in Lesotho. The students will learn the practice and development of adult education in relation to the social and economic development of Lesotho.

AEC 230-6: ADULT EDUCATION AND THE COMMUNITY

This course is intended to expose students to the social, cultural, practical and economic setting of adult education in Lesotho. It will look into the effects of socio-economic environment on the adult learner. In addition, community as a social institution and the concept of community development will be explored. The roles of an adult educator and community worker will be covered. The course will also deal with the relationship between adult education changes; including the adult educator as a change agent, leader and consultant in the community. Lastly, adult learning process; socialization process and adult education will be discussed.

APPENDIX B

SUB-DEGREE PROGRAM (CERTIFICATE IN ADULT EDUCATION)
FIRST AND SECOND SEMESTER TIMETABLE FOR YEARS 1 & 2

THE NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF LESOTHO
INSTITUTE OF EXTRA MURAL STUDIES

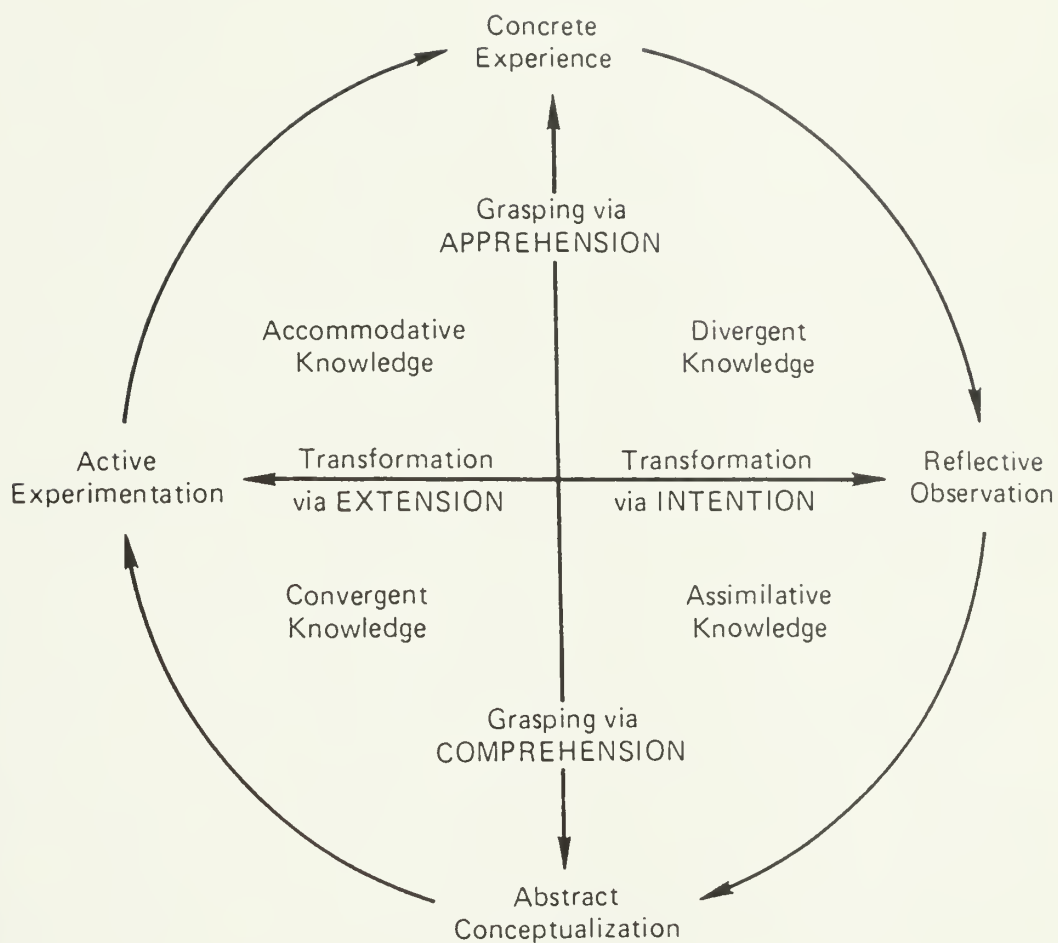
Adult Education Division

Sub-degree Program (Certificate in Adult Education)
First and Second Semester Time-table for Years 1&2

COURSE & TIME SAT. & SUNDAY	PROGRAM & COURSE TITLE	ROOM NO. & NO. OF HOURS
AEC 100-6; 8.45-10.45 AM	Communication Skills I	Rm 108 3hrs
AEC 200-6 10.45-11 AM	Organization and Implementation of Community Programs	Rm 114 3hrs
	BREAK	BREAK
AEC 120-6; 11.00-1.00 PM	Learning and Teaching in Adult Education	Rm 108 3hrs
AEC 220-6 1.00- 2.00 PM	Adult Education Practice in Lesotho	Rm 114
	LUNCH	LUNCH
AEC 130-6; 2.00-4.00 PM	Principles of Adult Education	Rm 108
N/B. 100 level is Cert. One, and 200 level is Cert. Two.		

APPENDIX C

KOLB'S LEARNING MODEL



STRUCTURAL DIMENSIONS UNDERLYING THE PROCESS OF EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING AND THE RESULTING BASIC KNOWLEDGE FORMS (Kolb, 1984, p.42)

APPENDIX D

TEACHER CONSENT FORM

TEACHER CONSENT FORM

My name is Mantina Mohasi. I am a doctoral student at the University of Massachusetts. As part of my doctoral program, I am conducting a study regarding experiential learning approaches at UMASS. I am interested in observing adult education Certificate classes.

I will visit the school several times from July to August 1999. In August, I will videotape your classes and then watch 2-3 videotapes with you. I will also interview you concerning several aspects of how experiential learning approaches are or can be integrated into the Certificate program. The interviews will not interfere with the classes at all because I will complete them during your free time, (except videotaping the class that needs to be done during regular teaching time). I will also interview and review videotapes with several students.

After reading this form, if you agree to participate, please sign below. I then will contact you during my school visits to arrange mutually convenient times for interviewing and watching videotapes. Then conversations will be tape recorded and later transcribed by me. Neither your name nor any identity information will be used in any report; pseudonyms will be used instead. Your comments will be kept entirely confidential and I will not discuss your comments with other teachers or anyone else in the school.

After agreeing to participate, you may withdraw from the study at any time. Your signature in the space marked "signature" below indicates that you have read this form and agree to volunteer to participate.

I will be pleased to answer any questions that you may have with regard to the study. Please call me at IEMS 322-038 Ext. 3967

Participant signature: _____

Please print your name here: _____ Date _____

Researcher's signature: _____ Date _____

APPENDIX E

UNIVERSITY WITHOUT WALLS CORE COURSES

University Without Walls Core Courses

The University Without Walls curriculum includes three required courses, all usually taken in the first year of enrollment in the program. During a student's first semester, she or he takes Degree Development to research a field of study and plan an individualized degree and Perspectives on Learning to engage in critical reading and writing in preparation for writing a Prior Learning Portfolio.

In the second semester the UWW student takes Writing about Experience to meet the university for a junior-level writing course. In that course, the student writes a long, analytic narrative to demonstrate learning gained through experience. The portfolio is later reviewed for additional academic credit.

UWW 191A PERSPECTIVES ON LEARNING

Drawing from a range of readings and theoretical viewpoints, Perspectives on Learning encourages students to think critically and to question assumptions. By building on the knowledge students have gained from introductory level courses and their experience, this course is designed to challenge students to explore new ideas about learning and to integrate the perspectives of various academic disciplines. Students will have an opportunity to develop different ways of understanding the world around them through cross-cultural and historical readings.

Goals

The goals of Perspective on Learning are to help students develop the skills of critical reading, thinking, and writing by:

- Identifying and analyzing major themes in the reading and ways in which the authors substantiate them;
- Analyzing the arguments of others and constructing their own through both written and oral expression;
- Looking beyond the perspectives shaped by ethnicity, race, or gender to better understand other ways of seeing the world.

Format

This course is based on mutual participation of students and instructor. Students become active learners by, for instance, commenting on the readings, giving presentations, or working in small groups. Through discussing issues and solving problems together, students learn from and with other individuals. This format helps to develop a community of learners who may share ideas and friendship throughout the UWW experience. In the Weekends@UWW section, many of these activities occur online between monthly weekend meetings.

UWW 196Y DEGREE DEVELOPMENT

The Degree Development Seminar offers UWW students a process to assist them in designing an individualized degree. This process entails interviews, structured research, and a systematic review of their background and experience.

Goals

Though the concrete outcome of the course is an approved degree plan, the principal goals focus on the learning gained through the process. Students in the Degree Development Seminar should learn:

- How to organize their own learning by evaluating their skills, identifying goals, developing strategies, and designing both independent learning projects and an individualized degree plan;
- How to conceptualize a field of study through researching and designing an area of concentration;
- How to formulate questions, seek out information, and draw conclusions as a way to solve intellectual problems;
- How to direct these skills toward lifelong learning both in and out of the classroom.

Format

Because the course material is drawn primarily from each student rather than from a set of shared readings, students will engage in a number of interactive tasks, such as small group discussions, a group library tour, class presentations, and class learning exercises. The instructor of the course will give brief presentations on the degree goals and process, offer feedback on written work, and facilitate the class discussions and activities. In the Weekends@UWW section, many of these activities occur online between monthly weekend meetings.

UWW 370 WRITING ABOUT EXPERIENCE

Writing about Experience is an advanced course designed to allow students to enhance their writing skills, using their own experience as the subject matter. With very few exceptions, the students enrolled in the course use it as an opportunity to develop and revise a portfolio of experiential learning, which will later be evaluated for credit. Writing about Experience meets the University junior year writing requirement.

Goals

Students in the course should gain a better understanding of how to:

- Develop organization and consistent themes throughout a longer piece of writing;
- Integrate descriptive, analytical, and reflective writing;
- Respond to other's work with helpful comments and suggestions;
- Revise sections to create a coherent work.

Students should normally complete a full draft and at least one revision of their portfolio in preparation for review by the UWW teams at the end of the course.

Format

Students read their work to the class, either in large or small groups, and receive feedback from others to help in revision. In addition, the instructor will give presentations and handouts on writing issues. In the Weekends@UWW section, the class meets on campus every other week, with small group readings and responses occurring online during the interim.

Source: UWW (1999). UWW CORE COURSES (on-line, available internet: <http://uww.umass.edu/uww/courses.html>)

APPENDIX F

GRAND TOUR QUESTIONS

Grand Tour Questions

Question One

How do you understand experiential learning theory?

How do you define experience?

How do you understand democracy and freedom in the Certificate in Adult Education class?

How do you understand equality in the Certificate in Adult Education class?

Question Two

Which are the experiential learning approaches that are practiced in the Certificate in Adult Education class?

To what extent are the approaches integrated into the Certificate in Adult Education class?

If approaches like service learning, cooperative learning, internships, and practicum assignments, field-based experiences (role-plays, drama,) and credit for prior learning assessment, critical thinking approaches, were to be implemented, which would be implemented without changing the University policies?

How would you support the implementation of the approaches above? Especially credit for prior learning assessment?

How would such a program be assessed?

Question Three

Which would be the barriers in implementing experiential learning approaches?

How would such barriers be overcome?

What would be your opinion if Certificate students in Adult Education would present their field projects through the use of stories, drama, pictures, or other artifacts?

Would you like to add something to what you have said?

Thank you very much for participating in this study.

APPENDIX G

UWW PRIOR LEARNING CREDIT GUIDELINES

UWW Prior Learning Credit Guidelines

Level I

Portfolios in the 3-15 credit range. Students describe prior experiences and identify areas of learning gained through them. Credits awarded within this range depend on the student's ability to analyze and articulate effectively those experiences and to reflect on their personal or professional significance. The student's experience at this level is typically limited in terms of years in the field, breadth of exposure, or level of responsibility.

Level II

Portfolios in the 16-24 credit range: In addition to the expectations of the first level, students will demonstrate the ability to draw out principles and make connections between experiences. Credits awarded within this range depend on the student's ability to synthesize information: to find patterns, to trace the development of their skills and understanding in relation to experience, and to place their experiences in larger contexts. Students should be able to reflect on issues they have identified through experience as significant to their field.

Level III

Portfolios in the 24-33 credit range. Students selecting this option should have substantial experience in years, breadth of exposure, and/ or levels of responsibility. The portfolio should meet the expectations for the second level and also demonstrate an understanding of the relevant theoretical positions and issues in the field. At this level, students should demonstrate their ability to integrate theory with practice by comparing and contrasting the learning from their experiences with the insights and understanding contained in essential literature in their field. They will also be expected to examine their experience in relation to one important work or theoretical approach, or in relation to several approaches. Before enrolling in the writing course, the student will work with the faculty to develop a bibliography and a rationale for the literature selected.

Source: UWW (1996). UWW Prior Learning Handbook
Revised 12/96

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